Smithsonian

December 1993

Ventriloquism

Here, Charlie McCarthy–grand master of the snappy comeback (p. 56)

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HAVE YOU DRIVEN A FORD LATELY?

Ford

December 1993

Smithsonian

Volume 24, Number 9

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Cover: Just 36 inches tall, sassy Charlie McCarthy was a giant of an entertainer. Edgar Bergen, his creator and voice, drew up Charlie's features in 1922, took the sketch to wood-carvers–and the rest is showbiz history. Today Bergen's daughter, Candice, star of TV's *Murphy Brown*, says, "A lot of the spirit of Murphy is similar to Charlie's–irreverence, fearlessness. I sometimes do a chuckle that reminds me of his." Her childhood feelings toward Charlie? "The image of a buzz saw must have crossed my mind on occasion." Visitors can see Charlie, splinters and all, at the National Museum of American History (p. 56)
Photograph by Theo Westenberger

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Smithsonian (issn 0037-7333) is published monthly by the Smithsonian Associates, 900 Jefferson Drive, Washington, DC 20560.
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Editorial offices are at 900 Jefferson Drive, Washington, DC 20560.
Advertising and circulation offices are at 420 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10170.
SUBSCRIPTION PRICES: United States and possessions: $22 a year. Canada and all other countries: add $13 for each year. 80 percent of dues is designated for magazine subscriptions. Current issue price is $3. Back issue price is $5.
Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC and additional mailing offices.
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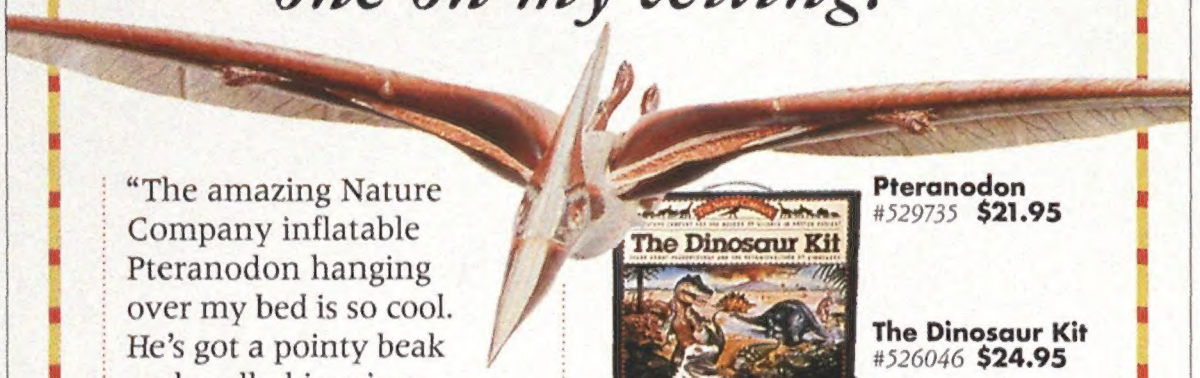

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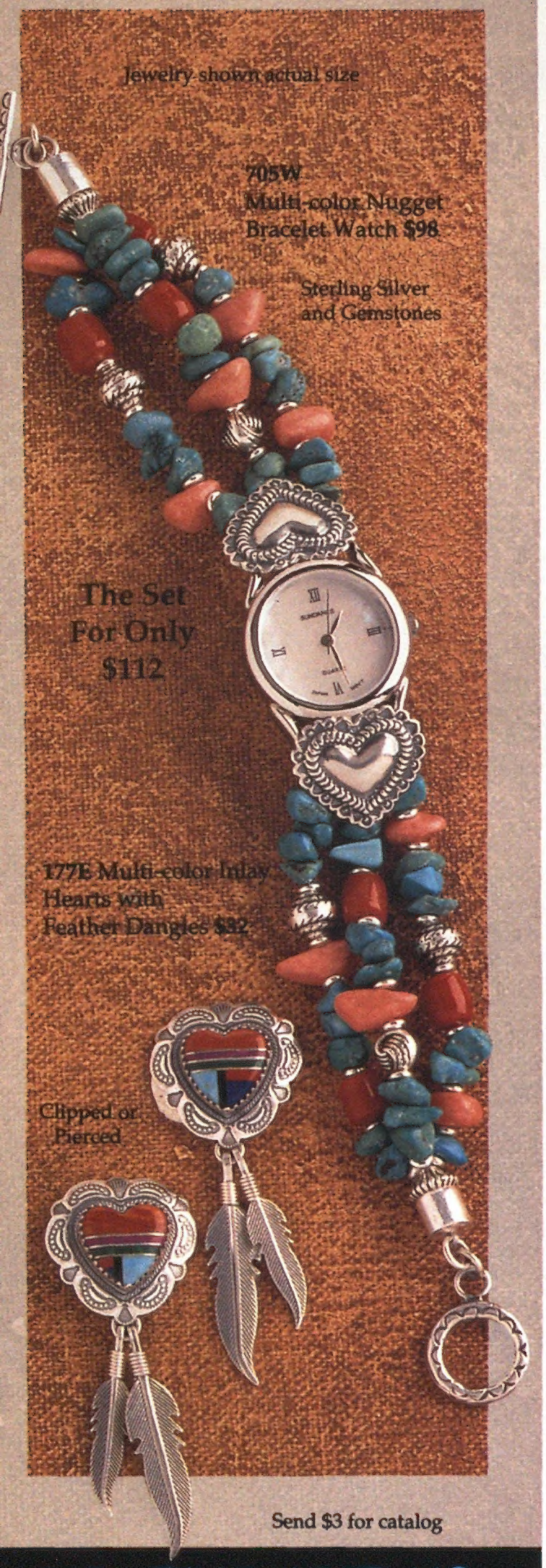

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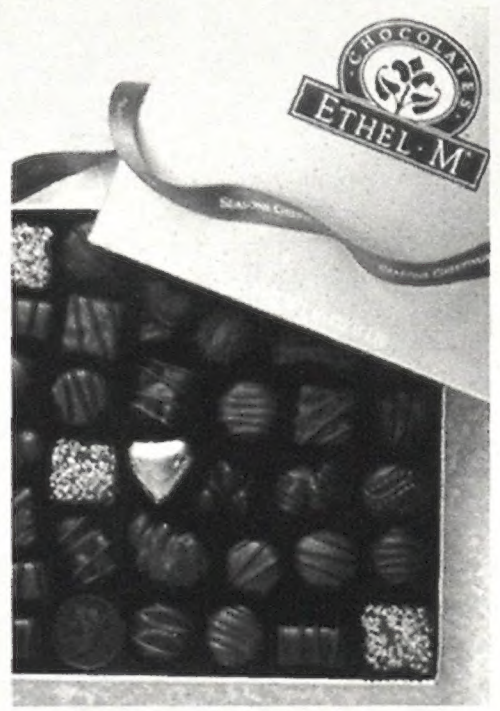

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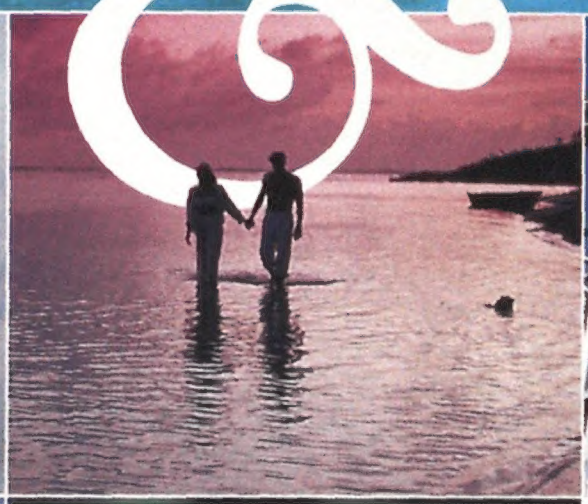

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Secretary Adams' comments

Smithsonian horizons

In crosscurrents of great change, it is becoming an unwisely long interval for an institution as widely engaged and open as the Smithsonian to continue beyond a decade or so without a replenishment of leadership. Having reached that conclusion independently and only after careful thought, I requested the Board of Regents to initiate a search for my successor in anticipation of my retiring late in 1994, on or about the tenth anniversary of my arrival at the Institution. I have agreed to continue to serve as Secretary until a successor is found.

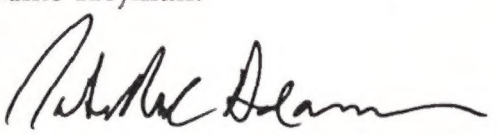
The Smithsonian is a wonderful institution, with an enduring, well-earned place in the hearts of Americans. It exemplifies, communicates and brings together our many diverse streams of thought and achievement. With a fine and dedicated staff, thousands of volunteers and millions of friends in all walks of life, it actively embodies some of our nation's most important aspirations and values.

There is no grander, more unifying commitment than the Institution's original, still deeply held dedication to "the increase and diffusion of knowledge." Having had the responsibility as Secretary for adapting that commitment to new and changing circumstances has been more than a great honor and source of deep satisfaction–it has been an education.

A time is at hand, however, when the Smithsonian must accommodate itself to still newer and ever-changing challenges. Some are certainly budgetary. Others–in the long run more important as well as more positive–grow out of new technological opportunities, changing international configurations, the responsibility to involve and reach out informatively to ever-widening public constituencies, and the advancing frontiers of knowledge itself. It is appropriate that the Regents begin the search for a new Secretary who cannot merely address these challenges prospectively but can turn them to advantage with years of additional service.

Coming from a long prior background in a research university, I still aspire to return to the role of scholar. Chronically unfinished work that I feel a personal responsibility to complete is an increasing frustration. With obvious regret, but with confidence that it is the right course, I will personally welcome a comprehensive effort to mobilize new energies and resources, and to take new directions.

The Regents have named a search committee consisting of five members of the Board and one former member–I. Michael Heyman, chairman; Jeannine S. Clark; Barber B. Conable jr.; Hanna H. Gray; Wesley S. Williams jr.; and former Regent William J. Bowen. They have already begun their work, and I would like to devote the remainder of my column to a letter from Mike Heyman.



Dear Smithsonian Associate:

The Board of Regents values your membership in the family of the Smithsonian Institution and requests your help in identifying candidates for our next Secretary.

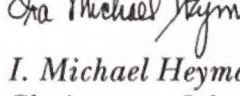
The Search Committee has just begun the challenging task of finding Secretary Adams' successor. This search cannot succeed without the perspectives of our many supporters. The Smithsonian is an incredibly broad and complex institution. Our Search Committee, and the Regents as a whole, would be well served by your suggestions.

We thus invite your ideas on the qualities we should be seeking in a new Secretary as well as any nominations or application (together with a curriculum vitae) you would care to make. As we have stated in a widely circulated announcement, we want to have your response by December 17, 1993. If you send it to the following address, we can guarantee its handling in confidence:

James M. Hobbins
Secretary to the Search Committee
Room SI-215
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D.C. 20560

Please know that you have my thanks in advance for any help you can lend to our efforts. On behalf of the Search Committee and the entire Board of Regents, I pledge that we will do our best to ensure continued enlightened leadership for this great institution into the next century.

Sincerely,



I. Michael Heyman
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Letters to the Editor

Redwood National Park

Dear Sir: Your October article is a telling example of what is going to happen throughout the Pacific Northwest given the current circumstances surrounding the spotted owl and the fate of over eight million acres of Forest Service timberlands in the region. Because of the Endangered Species Act and a federal agency held hostage by radical environmentalists within and without its ranks, the potential for creating hundreds of Orick, Californias, along the entire West Coast exists.

Under the current agenda the United States will have to retrain a cadre of "professional tourists" in order to maintain any economic stability there.
George C. Kirkmire, Executive Assistant
Washington Contract Loggers
Association
Olympia, Washington

Dear Sir: There is no doubt that the logging community of the Northern Pacific Coast of California has suffered. We must not forget or trivialize their suffering. But Mr. Kiester's article fails to explore constructive ways to improve the situation and place the blame for this situation on the timber companies, where it squarely belongs.

First, the National Park Service did a poor job of making Redwood National Park into a decent tourist attraction. It lacks a visitors' center and has insufficient interpretive and recreational activities.

And second, mills in the Pacific Northwest are shutting down because timber companies have constructed so many mills that processing capacity exceeds growth rate. Attractively high short-term profits lured timber companies to adopt selfish, cynical, shortsighted cut-and-run logging policy.
Shi-Ling Hsu
Davis, California

Dear Sir: It is mechanization in sawmills and the end of what once seemed an endless supply of big trees that has shocked the timber-based economy and culture of California's North Coast.

Investment in processes to add value to timber–manufacture of doors, windows, finger-jointed moldings and laminated trusses–can and will preserve highly valued jobs in the industry, along with economic diversification that will lead to a new, strong and resilient local economy. The region's staggering natural beauty, exemplified by the ancient redwood, will continue to be one of its strongest magnets for new development.
Dan Hamburg, Member of Congress
First District of California
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir: Until the late 1940s, Orick was a small dairying community that became a logging town as a result of the post-World War II housing and lumber boom. Most displaced timber workers lived in Orick for less than 20 years and would have had to move on anyway, once the 20,000 acres of old-growth timber in the park had been cut.

Since over 75 percent of the land purchased by Redwood National Park had already been clear-cut, the effect on the industry was much less than the article implied. The impact of automation, and log and job exports, have affected Orick and similar communities much more than the creation of a park.
Gisela Rohde
McKinleyville, California

Tabloids

Dear Sir: The *National Enquirer* has been right all along. Aliens are among us and they have even taken over my beloved SMITHSONIAN!

There was a disquieting sense of something amiss among the nouns in this issue. In virtually all cases gender had been removed! Where once authors called the congress of human beings *humanity,* it had become the ugly, noneuphonious *humankind.* And a university department head had invidiously been changed from *chairman* (or *chairwoman*) to one having *chaired* the department.

Genderless, passionless aliens seek to neuterize our language, the first stage in softening up our cognitive abilities. To all members of humanity surviving alien brainwashing, strike out against the loss of gender. Oppose *personing*!
Stephen Somerstein
Mountain View, California

Dear Sir: These people, for no reason but money, knowingly crank out a tidal wave of falsehoods, lies and hyperbole that, by their own admission, most of their readers believe. I do not think the tabloid press is a harmless curiosity but rather a significant contributor to both the decline in critical thinking and the increase in cynicism. Clearly, millions take it very seriously. Is this really different from selling false cures and other species of fraud?
Curt Brown
Boulder, Colorado

Coral reef

Dear Sir: Among the most interesting and exciting observations on coral reefs after dark are those events that can be seen only with the lights out–caused by bioluminescence. Although bioluminescent fish, jellyfish and other creatures are sometimes difficult to see and to maintain, bioluminescent phytoplankton are nearly ubiquitous, and easy to keep and maintain in home or laboratory.

We have been using them as a science-education tool to help develop science observation and process skills among elementary and middle school teachers in Utah. The organisms are absolutely fascinating for a wide range of scientific activities and observations.
J. D. Andrade
University of Utah
Salt Lake City

Gas stations

Dear Sir: Before the first filling station came to town in the 1920s, one had to gas up at a pump installed at the livery stable. When we finally had a real filling station, the proud owner held a contest: ten gallons of gasoline for the best name. The award went to a doctor who came up with "WAGO" (water, air, gas, oil).

It kept that name for years.
Thomas M. Wade III
St. Joseph, Missouri

Dear Sir: My first job when I arrived as an emigrant from Great Britain in 1953 was that of a service station attendant at a Gulf station in Cincinnati. Our team

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of four or five young men rushed to each car arriving at a pump, each with a specific assignment: one to check tires; one to wash windows; one to pump gas, etcetera. Courtesy and service brought customers back time after time.

Today you have to drive around looking for service and air. There is no free air. Some gas stations have coin-operated air dispensers costing from 25 to 50 cents, depending on how fast you can move to check and fill your tires.
Maurice G.A. Elton
Dallas

Peter Paul Rubens

Dear Sir: How very modern and chic Rubens' *Marchesa* looked on your cover–from her very curly hairstyle, her make-up, even the earrings. Only her ruff and gown are dated.
Boneda Elick
Godfrey, Illinois

Dear Sir: Your illustration of Rubens' oil sketch *The Meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek* (page 63) is inverted. A splendid work from either side, your version might more appropriately be called *The Meeting of Melchizedek and Abraham.*
David Morgan Frost, Esq.
Arlington, Virginia
The oil sketch, or modello, *for the tapestry as shown on page 63 is reversed. It appears correctly below. However, the tapestry itself is as shown on page 63. Since Rubens' tapestries were woven from the back, the* modello *is a mirror image of the finished weaving.* Ed.

Dear Sir: Henry Adams' suggestion that the luminous transparency of skin in Rubens' later paintings was due to his suffering gout is absurd. Rubens' skill with a brush, developed over a lifetime of painting, accounts for the "spiritual luminosity" in his later paintings.
Mark Havill
Penn Yan, New York

Henry Petroski

Dear Sir: The invention of the zipper was greeted in Akron, Ohio, with great civic pride. The University of Akron and its teams' nickname is the "Zips," shortened from the original "Zippers"!
Paul N. Herbert
Alexandria, Virginia

Dear Sir: Your article claims that a true safety pin did not appear until 1849. This is not the case. I own two ancient Etruscan fibulae made of bronze. There is no question that they are safety pins: one end is formed with a two-turn coiled spring, the other is pointed and snaps into the usual protective sheath.
Saul B. Marantz
Bridgewater, New Jersey

National Gallery of Art, Washington

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Around the Mall and beyond

America's Jazz Heritage, a ten-year national tour of exhibits and concerts, strikes up with the Duke's lush tunes

In a line, two abreast, we shuffled along the sidewalk of Harlem's West 125th Street, aiming for the glaring marquee of the Apollo Theatre. "Museum of City of New York Salutes Duke Ellington," it proclaimed. Sidewalk vendors of jewelry and scarves hawked their wares and grinned at us as we turned into the theater. "So you're gonna get some real culture!" one called out.

That was what we were after. It was opening night for a ten-year series of traveling programs devoted to our American jazz heritage, supported by the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund's generous $7.5 million gift to the Smithsonian.

We first-nighters had already gathered at the Museum of the City the New York (MCNY) for a preview of the exhibition "Beyond Category: The Musical Genius of Duke Ellington," created by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) and the Museum of American History, and now put on the road by SITES. Between now and the year 2003 the series, called "America's Jazz Heritage," will feature exhibits on such topics as Louis Armstrong, New Orleans jazz and the Swing Era. When possible, the excellent Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra will perform. And radio concerts, hosted by Lena Horne and called "Jazz Smithsonian," are scheduled to begin next month on American Public Radio.

Duke Ellington is a great choice to kick it all off (SMITHSONIAN, May 1993). "Beyond Category"–holding down most of the first floor at MCNY–is bright, inventive, often funny, sometimes sad, always honest, and as American as jazz itself. The whole show oozes Ellington's music and memories like a paper bag filled with maple syrup. Rooms and corridors ring with faint scraps of "Caravan" and "It Don't Mean a Thing" and the very soft trombones of "Mood Indigo." The Duke's music–as he wrote it, arranged it or performed it–epitomizes the best of jazz, and the more you hear it, the more you realize the man's brilliance.

Besides the museum show, MCNY is providing walking tours of the city's old Ellington haunts. Lectures and concerts will also celebrate the Duke. "Beyond Category" tells Ellington's story and at the same time reminds us of the lively, artistic, stimulating Harlem of the 1920s and '30s. There was plenty to go on–some 200,000 pages of documents in the Smithsonian's massive Ellington collection.

I had "met" Duke Ellington in the '30s when I was a college freshman, a lifetime ago. I met him again this opening day in October and realized that, although he died 20 years ago, I got to know him a lot better.

Edward Kennedy Ellington was born in Washington and grew up in the early 1900s, a time when most of the capital was strictly segregated. His aristocratic air and love of nice clothes led to his nickname, "Duke." He absorbed the music of his world–spirituals, the marches of John Philip Sousa and the U.S. Marine Band, tinny upright pianos tinkling out the beginnings of ragtime. He wrote "Soda Fountain Rag" when he was 14 (later explaining that he had come up with the name because he "had been working as a soda jerk at the Poodle Dog Cafe"), and before he reached 20 he'd organized a band, the Duke's Serenaders.

"Beyond Category," a traveling show, focuses on Duke Ellington, here c. 1950.

The MCNY exhibit–which differs only slightly from the one here at the Museum of American History–is a montage of the Duke's Washington years. I especially liked one of his early memories, depicted with a quote from him: "There were many open lots around Washington, then, and we used to play baseball on an old tennis court on 16th Street. President [Teddy] Roosevelt would come by on his horse sometimes and watch us play. When he got ready to go, he would wave, and we would wave at him." How surprised that lad would have been to know that someday he would be the guest of honor at the White House!

The Duke moved to Harlem in 1923, just as this section of far uptown Manhattan was booming with music, writing, painting–what came to be known as the Harlem Renaissance. All that creativity worked its magic on his own style of composing and playing. "Harlem, to our minds, did indeed have the world's most glamorous atmosphere," he once wrote.

Poet Langston Hughes agreed: "Had I been a rich young man," he wrote, referring to the '20s, "I would have bought a house in Harlem and built musical steps up to the front door and installed chimes that at the press of a button played Ellington tunes."

In "Beyond Category," the streets of Harlem as Ellington knew them come to life. From 1927 to 1931 he was a fixture at the famous Cotton Club, and the exhibit includes a mockup of the nightclub's glittering marquee. It was for a whites-only clientele–posh and expensive.

Nearby you see cut-out figures of some fairly effete-looking whites posturing for one another–the men in top hats and fur-collared chesterfields, the women heavily lipsticked, wearing fancy, frilly dresses. It was a time when Harlem was *the* place for New York's jaded elite to visit. Another display depicts the Savoy Ballroom. Music surrounds you, and the cut-out figures inside are of blacks, dancing. It looks like they are having a lot more fun than the status seekers at the Cotton Club.

The exhibit at MCNY will close around March 20, and move on to such cities as Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles–and Atlanta, in time for the '96 Olympics. And the other exhibits in "America's Jazz Heritage, a Partnership of the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund and the Smithsonian Institution," as the series'

full title reads, will be coming along with all their own remembrances.

On the opening night of "Beyond Category," a huge swarm of New Yorkers packed the museum, roamed through its 4,000-square-foot Ellington display, tried out the interactive videos–all rich with snippets of the Duke's career–and crammed the little movie theater where we watched and heard him in action. The whole museum rang with memories of Ellington songs.

Later that evening we piled into buses and headed uptown to the Apollo Theatre. Built in 1913, the Apollo started out with burlesque shows for the usual whites-only audiences. Fanny Brice played there, as did Fats Waller. In later years, as a beloved fixture in Harlem, the Apollo hosted the likes of Count Basie, Nat "King" Cole, Sammy Davis jr., Josephine Baker–and of course Duke Ellington. Its fortunes wavered. By 1980 it seemed doomed to rot. But now, beautifully restored, the Apollo is home to the TV program *Showtime at the Apollo.* It's the perfect spot to recapture the Ellington style.

We settled into our seats, and the curtain rose on the magnificent 19-piece Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra, swinging straight into "Take the 'A' Train." Its beat produced enough heel-tapping to worry an architect. The program told the story behind the "'A' Train" piece. Written by the Duke's arranger and lyricist Billy Strayhorn, it was based on the fact that a New Yorker could get to Harlem, God's own country, on the "A" train. It was, of course, a huge hit. Strayhorn used to claim that he had merely been writing subway directions, but for 33 years the song served as the Ellington band's theme.

Trying to write about music is as frustrating as attempting to put paintings into words. But listening to the selections of the Duke's work that night at the Apollo took me far beyond nostalgia stirred by tunes that evoked special memories of college dorms with radios blaring and after-game parties.

A film clip back in the exhibit had caught my interest. It was a comment from one of Ellington's musicians. Apparently when the Duke would see some slice of Harlem life–something as simple as an old man with an uneven walk–a rhythm would occur to him. Then he'd build on it.

The rhythms of the resulting songs are broken and quickly changeable–anything but simple. And then–sometimes with his trombone section ("God's trombones," one admirer called them)–the Duke sees the light and lets us out of his web of notes, smoothly and movingly.

One of the Smithsonian Masterworks Orchestra's trombonists, Britt Woodman, put in nine years with the Duke. Playing his music was old hat to Woodman, but John Hasse, curator at the Museum of American History and author of a fine new book, *Beyond Category: the Life and Genius of Duke Ellington,* tells me that Ellington is very tough to play for most musicians–"virtuosic, demanding, with subtle balances and shadings." You see what I mean about trying to describe music?

By the time the Apollo concert was over, the Duke had touched us all, just as he used to do years ago, just as he touched Queen Elizabeth and five Presidents. "Do you remember him?" I asked a woman as we were leaving.

"I used to dance to his music," she said. "I was remembering the steps, listening to that music."

Edwards Park

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Phenomena, comment and notes

Tentacled nautiloids, coral-like bryozoan colonies, ribbed trilobites, crinoids on slender stems, lived in ancient seas; most shells littering bottom were brachiopods.

To find the action in the Silurian, you would have had to leave the lifeless land and walk the sea floor

Sailors joke about never being more than two or three miles from land–straight down. Often we landlubbers are even closer than that to the oceans: not those of today, that is, but the oceans that were. Over hundreds of millions of years the land has risen and fallen, mountains have risen and fallen, the sea has risen and fallen. If we could see a time-lapse film of Earth, shot from space at the rate of one frame every million years, we would see frenetic, seething action.

Geologists see this film every time they walk outside. They can look at the most ordinary sorts of rocks and see them being laid down as sediment or being extruded as molten magma that then "froze" and "melted" again and again. Their cousins the paleontologists can look at the same formation and see what organisms were living under what conditions when the rock was laid down.

Sometimes even the untrained eye can make out shells embedded in rock; in fact, it was seashells high in mountain ranges that first convinced early geologists that Earth's surface is not static. But most of the time a guide is necessary to see what is there. Just as the earliest stone tools left by humans could be nothing more than rock fragments to a layperson, so a lot of fossils require a trained eye to appreciate them.

Recently a friend and I went on a foray to an abandoned quarry led by an invertebrate paleontologist, a scientist interested in animals without backbones (he positively curled his lip at the mention of dinosaurs). During the school year Ken Beem teaches at Montgomery College in Rockville, Maryland. During the summer he tries to correlate the great extinctions of the geological past with what was happening with world climate, sea level, the oxygen content of the atmosphere and the like.

At the site near Hancock in western Maryland, the entrance was anything but inviting. In addition to the usual beer bottles and everyday trash, there were two plastic bags containing complete rib cages (they could have been human for all I knew) and the front half of a long-dead deer giving off a nasty stench. We could hear the tire-whine from the Interstate that had brought us there. Walk in we did, however, and soon came to an amphitheater formed when limestone there had been taken out for the subsurface of highways. We were looking at a wall of nondescript dark rock with enough striations to show that the whole block had been tilted to the right. What we really were seeing was a succession of floors of a shallow sea–we were seeing this piece of the planet as it was 400 million years ago.

The world was much warmer then. There was less oxygen in the air, and sea level was much higher. Where Washington, D.C. is today lay only a string of volcanoes. To the east was the Iapetus Sea, a narrow body of water, and then Europe, practically visible above the horizon. The quarry site had been several hundred miles west of what is now Washington, under a shallow sea that stretched westward over much of what is now North America. But a collision with Europe had buckled this bit of crust, accordioning the rock into the kind of tilted strata we were seeing, and incidentally bringing today's quarry site closer to today's Washington.

Plants were just beginning to move onto the land, establishing beachheads along the edges of lagoons and streams. Few plants lived on dry land yet. There was no soil–only rock, rubble and sand. The first fish with jaws were just evolving. Almost all the action was still in the sea (even today, as University of Massachusetts biologist Lynn Margulis points out, our planet is wildly misnamed–only 29 percent of its surface is "earth").

The deep sea was as dead as the land. There were no ice caps in that warmer time, and therefore no strong, deep-water ocean currents. Ice caps act as "chillers" that cool surface water so that it drops to the bottom and then moves toward the Equator as more surface water is cooled and descends. With no water moving down, no oxygen was transported to the depths, and without oxygen most organisms cannot live. Our new understanding of what happens when the ocean currents stop helps explain the climate "flickering"–changes in average temperatures of as much as 10 degrees F in as little as 10 to 50 years–recently discovered by climatologists (*Phenomena,* August 1993).

The shallow seas, however, were jumping. The dominant animals were invertebrates, much to the joy of our guide. (The same is true today. Somewhere I've

Your symptoms are bothering you, but you're still waiting to see your doctor about your enlarged prostate. Maybe it's time to stop waiting.

Ask your doctor about the prescription medicine PROSCAR®.

(FINASTERIDE)

Finally, a medicine for the treatment of symptomatic benign prostate enlargement

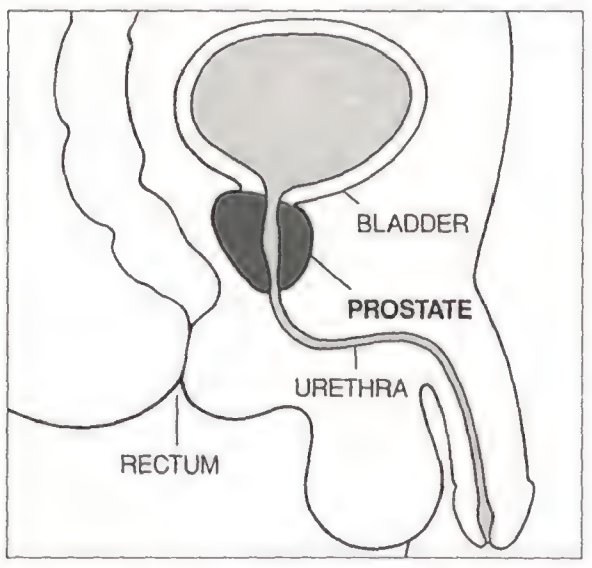
You can't make it till halftime anymore without having to go to the bathroom. You're getting up several times a night to urinate. It's beginning to bother you, but up to now, you've lived with it. The question is, should you?

Until recently, there wasn't a medicine that could help the condition known as symptomatic benign prostate enlargement or BPH. But now there is PROSCAR, the first oral prescription medicine that can actually shrink an enlarged prostate.

However, it is important to know the following: PROSCAR doesn't work for everyone. Even though the prostate shrinks, you may not see an improvement in urinary flow or symptoms. And you may need to take PROSCAR for 6 months or more to see whether it helps you.

How PROSCAR can shrink an enlarged prostate

As a man ages, a key hormone can help cause the prostate to grow.



The prostate surrounds part of the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder. As the prostate enlarges, it can squeeze the urethra and cause urinary problems.

PROSCAR actually blocks the production of this hormone, so it helps shrink the prostate to a smaller size in many men. As a result, some men treated with PROSCAR experience an increased urinary flow and an improvement in urinary symptoms.

Why you should see your doctor soon

The problem will probably not get better by itself. In many cases, the prostate continues to enlarge and the symptoms may get worse. So if your urinary symptoms are bothering you, consult your family doctor or a urologist and find out if PROSCAR is an appropriate treatment for you. It is also important to have regular checkups. *While benign prostate enlargement is not cancer and does not lead to cancer, the two conditions can exist at the same time.*

Remember, only a doctor can evaluate your symptoms and their possible causes. So don't wait any longer. You may find out that your enlarged prostate can be made into a smaller problem.

For a free, informative booklet, "Every man should know about his prostate," call 1-800-635-4452 today.

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Please see patient information on the adjacent page.

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PATIENT INFORMATION ABOUT PROSCAR® (Prahs-car)
Generic name: finasteride (fin-AS-tur-eyed)

PROSCAR is for the treatment of symptomatic benign prostatic hyperplasia and for use by men only.

Your doctor may prescribe PROSCAR if you have a medical condition called benign prostatic hyperplasia or BPH. This occurs only in men.

Please read this information, as well as the leaflet which accompanies your medication, before you start taking PROSCAR. Also, read the leaflet each time you renew your prescription, just in case anything has changed. Remember, this leaflet does not take the place of careful discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss PROSCAR when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups.

What is BPH?

BPH is an enlargement of the prostate gland. After age 50, most men develop enlarged prostates. The prostate is located below the bladder. As the prostate enlarges, it may slowly restrict the flow of urine. This can lead to symptoms such as:

- a weak or interrupted urinary stream
- a feeling that you cannot empty your bladder completely
- a feeling of delay or hesitation when you start to urinate
- a need to urinate often, especially at night
- a feeling that you must urinate right away.

Treatment options for BPH

There are three main treatment options for BPH:

- **Program of monitoring or "Watchful Waiting".** If a man has an enlarged prostate gland and no symptoms or if his symptoms do not bother him, he and his doctor may decide on a program of monitoring which would include regular checkups, instead of medication or surgery.
- **Medication.** Your doctor may prescribe PROSCAR for BPH. See **"What PROSCAR does"** below.
- **Surgery.** Some patients may need surgery. Your doctor can describe several different surgical procedures for BPH. Which procedure is best depends on your symptoms and medical condition.

What PROSCAR does

PROSCAR lowers levels of a key hormone called DHT (dihydrotestosterone), which is a major cause of prostate growth. Lowering DHT leads to shrinkage of the enlarged prostate gland in most men. This can lead to gradual improvement in urine flow and symptoms over the next several months. However, since each case of BPH is different, you should know that:

- Even though the prostate shrinks, you may NOT see an improvement in urine flow or symptoms.
- You may need to take PROSCAR for six (6) months or more to see whether it helps you.
- Even though you take PROSCAR and it may help you, it is not known whether PROSCAR reduces the need for surgery.

What you need to know while taking PROSCAR

- **You must see your doctor regularly.** While taking PROSCAR, you must have regular checkups. Follow your doctor's advice about when to have these checkups.
- **About side effects.** Like all prescription drugs, PROSCAR may cause side effects. Side effects due to PROSCAR may include impotence (or inability to have an erection) and less desire for sex. Each of these side effects occurred in less than 4% of patients in clinical studies. In some cases side effects went away while the patient continued to take PROSCAR.

Some men taking PROSCAR® (Finasteride) may have a decrease in the amount of semen released during sex. This decrease does not appear to interfere with normal sexual function.

You should discuss side effects with your doctor before taking PROSCAR and anytime you think you are having a side effect.

- **Checking for prostate cancer.** Your doctor has prescribed PROSCAR for symptomatic BPH and not for cancer—but a man can have BPH and prostate cancer at the same time. Doctors usually recommend that men be checked for prostate cancer once a year when they turn 50 (or 40 if a family member has had prostate cancer). These checks should continue while you take PROSCAR. PROSCAR is not a treatment for prostate cancer.
- **About prostate specific antigen (PSA).** Your doctor may have done a blood test called PSA. PROSCAR can alter PSA values. For more information, talk to your doctor.
- **A warning about PROSCAR and pregnancy.**

PROSCAR is for use by MEN only.

PROSCAR is generally well tolerated in men. However, women who are pregnant, or women who could become pregnant, should avoid the active ingredient in PROSCAR.

If the active ingredient is absorbed by a woman who is pregnant with a male baby, it may cause the male baby to be born with abnormalities of the sex organs. Therefore, any woman who is pregnant or who could become pregnant must not come into direct contact with the active ingredient in PROSCAR.

Two of the ways in which a woman might absorb the active ingredient in PROSCAR are:

Sexual contact. Your semen may contain a small amount of the active ingredient of the drug. If your partner is pregnant, or if you and your partner decide to have a baby, you must stop taking PROSCAR and talk to your doctor. If your partner could become pregnant, proper use of a condom can reduce the risk of exposing her to your semen (discuss this further with your doctor).

Handling broken tablets. Women who are pregnant or who could become pregnant must not handle broken tablets of PROSCAR.

PROSCAR tablets are coated to prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling. If this coating is broken, the tablets should not be handled by women who are pregnant or who could become pregnant.

If a woman who is pregnant comes into contact with the active ingredient in PROSCAR, a doctor should be consulted. Remember, these warnings apply only if the woman exposed to PROSCAR is pregnant or could become pregnant.

How to take PROSCAR

Follow your doctor's advice about how to take PROSCAR. You must take it every day. You may take it with or between meals. To avoid forgetting to take PROSCAR, it may be helpful to take it the same time every day.

Do not share PROSCAR with anyone else; it was prescribed only for you.

Keep PROSCAR and all medicines out of the reach of children.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PROSCAR AND BPH, TALK WITH YOUR DOCTOR. IN ADDITION, TALK TO YOUR PHARMACIST OR OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.

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read that the animals that, pound for pound, dominate more of Earth's surface than any other are the sea cucumbers, those bratwurst-shaped blobs that scavenge the bottom from the littoral to the abyssal plain. They are not a big menu item in my house, but in other countries it's a different story. Even now the government of Ecuador is trying to control the wholesale harvesting of sea cucumbers around the Galápagos.)

Invertebrates were everywhere in that dark cliff at the quarry. Not wanting to go extinct ourselves, should a fresh block happen to fall, we avoided the cliff face itself and used our hammers on the hill of rubble on the right side of the cliff. It was show-and-be-told: we would chip out an interesting pattern or shape and take it to the instructor, who would tell us what treasure we had found.

We used to say, when everything seemed to be going right for someone, "the world is her oyster." Four hundred million years ago the world belonged to the oysters or rather to another, unrelated group of two-shelled filter feeders known as brachiopods, sometimes called lamp shells because they resemble oil lamps used in pre-electrical times. Apparently sea floors were covered with them, not only thousands of individuals but thousands of species, at least 40,000 in the fossil record. The age of reptiles might be coming, but this was the golden age of brachiopods. Even then, however, they were being challenged by those most dashing of invaders, the clams. This would not be a hundred-years war, such as the one historians devote their lives to, but a 100-million-years-plus war that only ended with the wave of extinctions at the end of the Permian, 245 million years ago. After that, for reasons unknown, clams took over. Perhaps 35 species of brachiopods survive to this day, but today's world makes clams as happy as, well, clams.

Dutifully I slipped and slid up the mountain of rubble and hacked out a couple of limestone fragments with the clear design of a ribbed brachiopod shell embedded in them. They aren't much to look at: they now repose on the driveshaft hump on the floor of my car, and at least twice I have nearly thrown them out before remembering how old and special they are.

A little later, luck intervened. I took a whack at a hand-size slab of stone, and it split. On one half was what looked like a cylinder with a wider lip at one end. It

was part of a segment of the stem of a crinoid, an underwater animal that looks just like a plant–a stem with a spreading flower on top. What look like petals on a blossom are arms that sweep algae and other food particles into the mouth. Unlike brachiopods, crinoids are doing very well today, thank you.

Ken Beem was finding all sorts of things. He held up what looked like fingers of coral and explained they were the work of bryozoans, animals that secrete a hard, protective covering around themselves somewhat as coral polyps do when building reefs. Beem found nearly intact snails and bits of ammonoids–cephalopods with spiral shells that look much like today's chambered nautilus. He did not find any fossil nautiloids, squidlike cephalopods that reached 30 feet in length and fed on trilobites. But he came up with handfuls of creatures known to paleontologists as GKWs, or God knows whats. These turned out to be the tentaculitids, which may have been free-swimming animals that may have been able to retract their tentacles into a sheath. Their fossils look like black, very thin cones perhaps an inch long. If nothing else I could now add GKWs to the DYCs (damned yellow compositae) of botanists and the LBJs (little brown jobs) of birders.

We walked farther around the cliff toward the road-cut where we had parked our cars. As we did so we walked forward in time, from limestone to sandstone, from the Silurian to the Devonian. In a few steps we moved from a sea inhabited only by hagfish, lampreys and fish armored with bony plates to the true fishes we know today. Sharks would appear in the Devonian; so would the first amphibians. By the end of the Devonian, nearly all the botanical groups–except flowering plants–would be in place.

Gradually the cliff became a steep hill. To me, it looked like the western Catskills: birches and pines between coffee-table-size rock outcrops covered with moss. One swing of the hammer changed all that. These were not rocks at all: beneath the moss was simply sand. It should have been obvious because the trail below was composed entirely of loose sand, looking like a path through dunes to a beach.

What we were seeing was a closing of that great inland sea. Beem explained that the limestone had formed entirely from the minute shells of marine algae. This can happen only in places where no sediment is coming off the land. Limestone had formed at the quarry site when it was hundreds of miles from any river mouths. When the land rose to displace that inland sea, the site remained under a small residual body of water. Now it was close to the land and its eroding rivers, and the rock particles we call sand piled up.

With my crinoid segment in a proper collection bag and the brachiopod fragments in my pocket, it was time to go. My friend and I crossed into West Virginia, to a steak house high on a hill where we could watch the sun set over rolling hills that reached to the horizon. It was a little like being on a ship moving through proverbially mountainous seas, but now we knew we were looking at the convoluted remnants of ancient sea bottoms, where life had teemed when the land was still as sterile as the moon. Even on land, we are citizens of the blue (read "water") planet.

John P. Wiley jr

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Smithsonian highlights

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Hours for most Smithsonian museums are 10 A.M.-5:30 P.M. daily. The Institution will be closed December 25.

Holiday events

Traditions of Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and the New Year will be observed at the National Museum of American History's annual Holiday Celebration, December 26-31, noon-4 P.M. daily: music, storytelling, exhibits.

Special December exhibits, events

National Museum of African Art

Astonishment and Power: Kongo Minkisi and the Art of Renée Stout (through January 2, 1994) The *minkisi* tradition of Central Africa and the contemporary art of Renée Stout. See *Highlights continued*, page 24.

Asen: Iron Altars from Ouidah, Republic of Benin (December 17-April 24, 1994) Exploration of beliefs, symbols, that spread from Africa to the New World and back.

Freer Gallery of Art

America Meets Asia Newly renovated and reinstalled galleries feature Asian, 19th- and early 20th-century American art, including works by James McNeill Whistler.

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

Contemporary Porcelain from Japan: 30 Works by 30 Masters (through September 5, 1994) Innovative and varied porcelain vessels were recently donated to the Sackler by the Japan Foundation.

Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden

Willem de Kooning from the Hirshhorn Museum Collection (through January 9, 1994) Paintings, drawings, sculptures, 1939-1985, by the Dutch-born American pioneer of Abstract Expressionism.

National Air and Space Museum

Monitoring Amazonia from Space (through March 30, 1994) How modern satellite technology is being used to track Amazonia's complex ecosystem.

Beyond the Limits: Flight Enters the Computer Age Computer revolution in aerospace.

National Museum of American History

Holiday Celebration (December 11-January 2, 1994) Exhibit includes annual "Trees of Christmas" display, toy trains.

World War II GI: The American Soldier's Experience (runs indefinitely) A firsthand look at the U.S. military.

National Postal Museum

The Smithsonian's newest museum, located next to Union Station on Capitol Hill, presents exhibitions tracing the history of the nation's mail service.

National Museum of Natural History

Chiefly Feasts: The Enduring Kwakiutl Potlatch (through March 6, 1994) Art and culture of the important Northwest Coast Native American ceremony.

O. Orkin Insect Zoo The newly renovated insect zoo features various insect habitats and a look at insects in your home.

National Zoological Park

Amazonia New permanent installation re-creates microcosm of world's largest rain forest and river habitat, explores wonders of this diverse ecosystem.

National Museum of American Art

Earthly Constellation: Photographs by Linda Connor (December 17-March 20, 1994) Images of sacred places by the contemporary American photographer.

On Location: Landscapes and Cityscapes in American Photography from the Museum's Collection (December 17-April 3) Ansel Adams, Berenice Abbott.

Renwick Gallery

The Arts and Crafts Movement in California: Living the Good Life (through January 9, 1994) Exhibit showcases the contribution of California artists to the Arts and Crafts movement in the United States from 1895 to 1930.

National Portrait Gallery

To the President: Folk Portraits by the People (December 10-September 5, 1994) One-of-a-kind gift portraits span 60 years.

VanDerZee, Photographer, 1886-1983 (through February 13, 1994) Retrospective looks at the 80-year career of the distinguished Harlem photographer.

Anacostia Museum

Before Freedom Came: African-American Life in the Antebellum South (December 12-March 1, 1994) SITES exhibition features personal stories about African-Americans who escaped slavery.

Arts and Industries Building Experimental Gallery

Dress Codes: Urban Folk Fashion (through January 30, 1994) The ways in which textiles serve as carriers and communicators of values in contemporary U.S. society.

Discovery Theater

Cinderella (through December 31: Tuesday-Friday, 10 A.M. and 11:30 A.M.; Saturday, 11:30 A.M. and 1 P.M. No performances December 24 and 25) A Bob Brown Puppet Productions show.

International Gallery, S. Dillon Ripley Center

The Power of Maps (through January 23, 1994) Exhibition of more than 300 historical and contemporary maps examines their significance as instruments of communication, persuasion, authority.

Cooper-Hewitt Museum (New York)

From Concept to Building: A Project in Singapore by Architect Paul Rudolph (through February 13, 1994) The design process.

Exhibition catalogs

Catalogs currently available include:

Astonishment and Power: Kongo Minkisi/ The Art of Renée Stout ($34.95 paper)

Jacob Kainen ($24.95)

To order, send check or money order to Smithsonian Museum Shops, 8308 Cinder Bed Road, Newington, Virginia 22122. Include 15 percent of purchase to cover postage, handling (minimum, $1.75).

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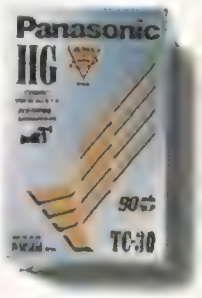

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Highlights continued

Powerful images from other worlds

The National Museum of African Art features Kongo minkisi *and the work of Renée Stout in a joint exhibition*

When Washington artist Renée Stout was 10 years old she saw a Kongo *nkisi* on display at Pittsburgh's Carnegie Museum. Other children drew back from the foreboding figure, with its surface of projecting nails and blades. But Stout was immediately drawn to the image, beguiled by its mysterious power, its aura of magic and otherworldliness. As a mature artist, she continues to call on that encounter as a source of inspiration, incorporating various elements from Kongo *minkisi* (the plural of *nkisi*) in her work.

"Astonishment and Power," on view at NMAfA through January 2, 1994, presents objects from these two distinct worlds: objects made in Central Africa in the late 1800s and early 1900s (Kongo *minkisi*), and objects made in the 1980s and '90s by Renée Stout.

The *minkisi* figures of the Kongo peoples of Central Africa are impressive, complex constructions intended to evoke astonishment in the beholder. Frequently mischaracterized as fetishes in the West, *minkisi* are best defined as "things that do things." They were used to effect change–to help mitigate the suffering imposed by an existence defined by disease, enslavement and colonial domination. Containers for powerful "medicines," magical ingredients, they took the form of wooden figures, clay pots, large shells or cloth bundles.

Invoking the sacred and the secular, the West and Africa, Stout's artfully assembled sculptures reflect her fascination with Kongo *minkisi*, African-American traditions of healing and conjuring, and her own family heritage.

"In the layered complexity of both *minkisi* and the work of Renée Stout," says NMAfA director Sylvia Williams, "one is struck by the power and intensity of objects that speak a language rich in metaphor about traditions, about the vicissitudes of human existence, and about the structure of the Universe."
Diane M. Bolz

A hunter of evildoers, *Nkisi Nkondi Mawenze* possesses power of the leopard.

Nkisi Nkondi Mungundu is built on glass bottle; neck ring contains "medicines."

Nails embedded in *Nkisi Nkondi* bear tokens related to search for wrongdoers.

Renée Stout's *Face Pouch* (1990) holds herbs and leftovers from earlier works.

Stout used an old doll, paper, paint, her own hair, to create *Fetish No. 3* (1989).

Feather headdress, animal skins, adorn *Nkisi Nduda*, a figure linked to warfare.

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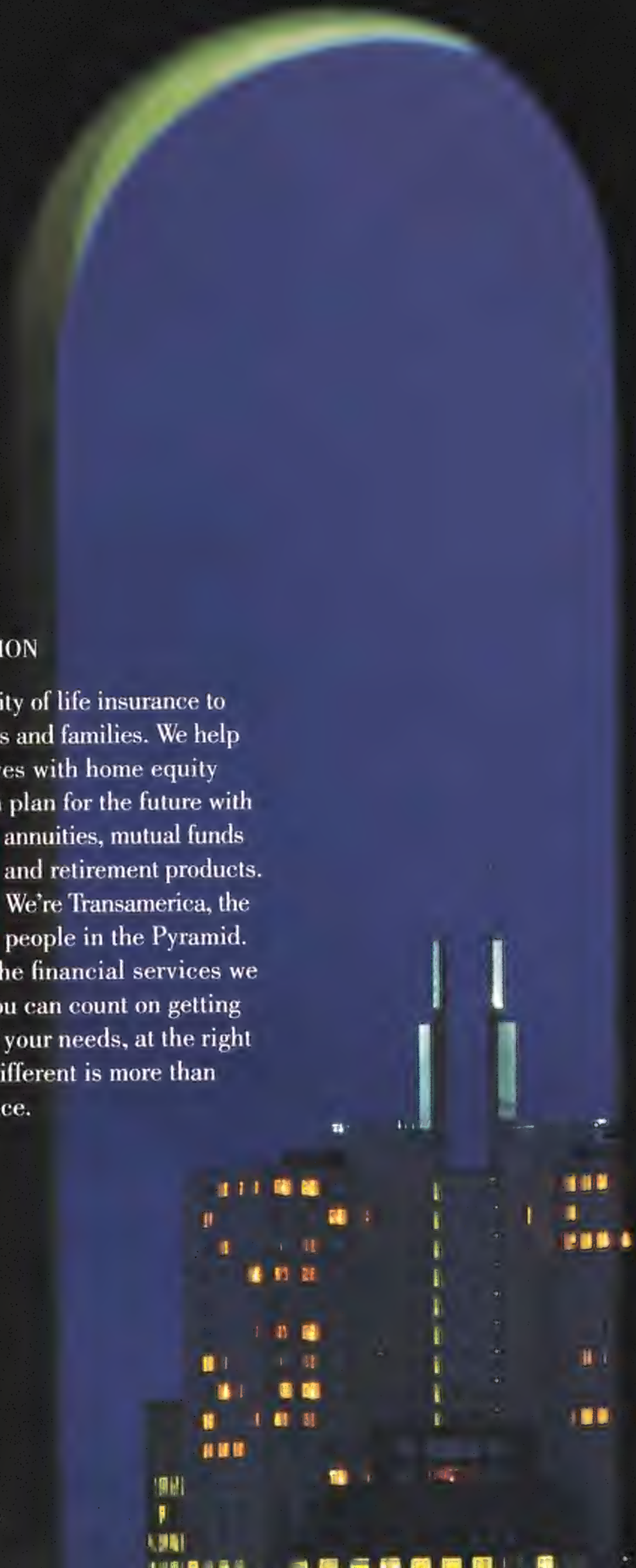


Today's visitors thrill to the same breathtaking view at Mesa Verde that overwhelmed Richard Wetherill.

By David Roberts

'Reverse archaeologists' are tracing the footsteps of a cowboy-explorer

The circular kivas scattered about the 800-year-old Cliff Palace were Anasazi ceremonial chambers.

A century ago rancher Richard Wetherill found the remnants of an ancient culture; finally his efforts are being recognized

It was a bitter day in December 1888, with snow on the wind. Across the top of the remote Mesa Verde in southwestern Colorado, Richard Wetherill and his brother-in-law Charlie Mason rode horseback, tracking cattle that had strayed from the family ranch in the Mancos Valley. Twenty-five miles from home, the ranchers faced a cold bivouac under the pines before they could bring the cattle in.

A looping track drew the two men near the mesa's edge, where the sandstone cliff dropped sheer to the talus below. They dismounted, walked to the rim and gazed east across a canyon they had never explored. Suddenly Wetherill blurted out a cry of astonishment.

Half a mile away, in the cliff forming the canyon's opposite wall, loomed an overhang that sheltered a natural cavern fully 400 feet long by 90 feet deep. Inside it stood the pristine ruins of an ancient city, more than 200 rooms built of stone and mud, dominated by a round three-story tower. "It looks just like a palace," murmured Mason.

Wetherill named the ruin Cliff Palace. The two men forgot about their cattle. Roping together dead trees with their lariats, they improvised a ladder to descend the cliff, then scrambled down to the canyon floor and up the opposite slope to enter the majestic ruin.

A passion for discovery yields still more ruins

It was as if the vanished inhabitants had walked off a few hours before, leaving everything in place. The rooms were strewn with intact ceramic pots sitting in the dust. On one floor the ranchers found a heavy stone ax, still hafted to its wooden handle. A perfunctory dig in the rubble uncovered three skeletons.

Wild with the passion of discovery, the men split up to search for other ruins in the few hours of daylight they had left. Wetherill headed north and west across the mesa top and stumbled upon another great ruin, which he named Spruce Tree House. He rejoined Mason at dusk; they built a fire and talked into the night.

In the morning, the pair found yet a third village, whose most startling feature was a soaring four-story tower. Square Tower House was the obvious name.

Today, more than 600,000 visitors come to Mesa Verde National Park every year. On the standard tour, they walk through the stabilized ruins of Cliff Palace and Spruce Tree House, and peer from a lookout point down on Square Tower House. The three villages are among the half-dozen cynosures of the park, with Cliff Palace–the best known of all Anasazi sites–one of the most famous ruins in the world.

The finding of Cliff Palace changed Wetherill's life utterly. The eldest of six siblings in a tight-knit Quaker clan from Pennsylvania, Richard struggled to keep the family's Alamo Ranch afloat through years of failed

Photographs by Terrence Moore

Of Wetherill (center, with brothers, c. 1893) his wife remarked: "his eyes looked a hole right into you."

crops and dubious investments. Meanwhile he transformed himself into a self-taught archaeologist. During the next 14 years, with his four brothers, Charlie Mason and a handful of other partners, Wetherill discovered and excavated far more Anasazi sites than any researcher before or since. Their number includes 182 ruins on Mesa Verde alone, as well as dozens in the tortured canyon of Grand Gulch in Utah; the exquisite village of Keet Seel in Arizona; and Pueblo Bonito in New Mexico's Chaco Canyon, the hub of Anasazi civilization in its most complex phase.

One might expect that Wetherill's achievement, which rivals that of Heinrich Schliemann at Troy or of Hiram Bingham at Machu Picchu, should be hailed as a landmark in American archaeology. For nearly a century, however, the reputation of the rancher-turned-savant has lingered under a cloud of controversy. Schliemann and Bingham had their own critics, but the places of both men in the pantheon of prehistoric discovery are secure. Wetherill's is not.

An ambivalence toward the Mancos rancher remains particularly acute regarding his early work at Mesa Verde. By his own later admission, when he began digging in the ruins Wetherill was little more than a pothunter. For that matter, in 1888 true archaeology had scarcely been practiced in the United States, and many a professional in Wetherill's time excavated as crudely as he.

As a cowboy whose formal education ended in high school, Wetherill later earned the scorn of a number of university-trained academics. One of them was Jesse Nusbaum, himself a pioneer in Anasazi archaeology as well as the superintendent of Mesa Verde National Park from 1921 through 1927. To the end of his life, Nusbaum dismissed Wetherill's work at Mesa Verde as "ravaging and looting" and as "commercial exploitation" of the ruins. He insisted that the Wetherills had used dynamite to open one ruin at Mesa Verde. No evidence of such a practice has ever been produced. Nusbaum even denied Wetherill credit for discovering Cliff Palace.

On a visit to Mesa Verde last June, I found that mixed feelings about Wetherill persist. As District Interpreter Linda Martin told me, "There's long been a controversy within our staff over Wetherill. I think what Wetherill did here a hundred years ago is what I would have done."

Research archaeologist Jack Smith was more critical. "I can't condemn the Wetherill brothers, but I can't praise them either," he said. "It's hard not to conclude that their excavating techniques were pretty brutal. I've seen three backcountry sites where somebody has used [Anasazi] roof beams as levers to tear out the back walls of ruins. At these sites, you find Wetherill's signature scrawled on the cave walls. Yes, that's only circumstantial evidence, but I think it's convincing."

At first, as he hauled artifacts out of the Mesa Verde ruins, Wetherill hoped to display them in Durango and Denver and sell them to collectors. Gradually, however, he realized that science would be better served if the intact collections could find their way into museums. He began to search for altruistic patrons.

One of the first was a young Swedish baron, Gustaf Nordenskiold, who was traveling across the West. Trained in geology, Nordenskiold had visited digs in Italy and was aware of the best European techniques. Hiring Richard Wetherill to supervise ambitious excavations at Mesa Verde in 1891, he taught the rancher to use a trowel instead of a shovel and stressed the importance of written and photographic documentation.

Wetherill was an eager student. Soon he had devised his own field-note forms, and the records he kept grew more and more detailed and precise. As he wrote a later patron, "This whole subject . . . is in its infancy and the work we do must stand the most rigid inspection, and we do not want to do it in such a manner that anyone in the future can pick flaws in it."

Eventually, the vast collections of Anasazi artifacts assembled by Wetherill would anchor the Southwest holdings of half a dozen major institutions, including the Field Museum in Chicago, as well as the American Mu-

David Roberts is at work on his next book, a personal narrative of his travels throughout Anasazi country.

seum of Natural History and the National Museum of the American Indian, both in New York City. Nordenskiold's assemblage found its way to the National Museum of Finland in Helsinki.

In nearly every case, Wetherill's field notes were sent to the museums along with the relics. Over the years, however, these records were sometimes misinterpreted, ignored or even misplaced–contributing in a perverse twist to Wetherill's reputation as a mere pothunter.

Wetherill's passion for the Anasazi soon became an obsession. No longer content to work the ruins of Mesa Verde, he launched far-flung expeditions into the unmapped canyons of Utah, Arizona and New Mexico. These jaunts usually took place during the winter, the only season the brothers could spare from ranch work. The sheer logistics of Wetherill's archaeological toil–up before dawn, working long into the night, camping in snowstorms, digging in frozen ground, packing artifacts by horseback more than a hundred miles back to Mancos–testify to his diligence.

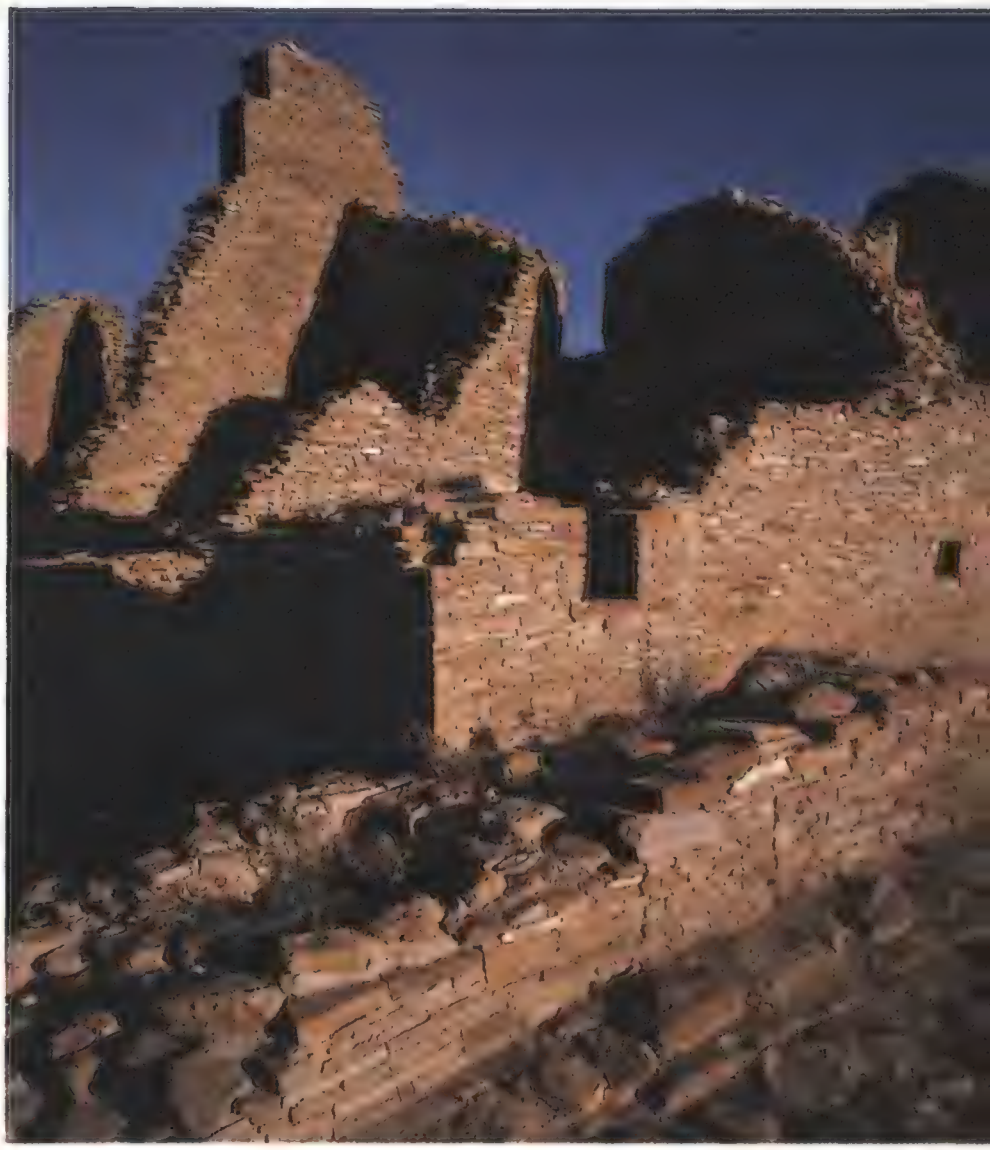
The Alamo Ranch, however, continued to fail. To supplement their income, the Wetherill brothers began guiding visitors through the ruins they had discovered. Among the Wetherill clients in 1895 were the Palmers, a family of traveling musicians from Kansas. Richard fell deeply in love with the 18-year-old harpist and soprano Marietta Palmer. With the family, Wetherill made his first trip to Chaco Canyon, then so remote as to be all but unknown to white explorers. On the way back from their two-month outing, Marietta was the only passenger who dared ride Wetherill's wagon as he forced it through a perilous ford of the swollen San Juan River. On the far bank, both drenched, Richard looked hard at Marietta: "Were you frightened?" "Why sure," she answered, "I was scared to death." "Will you marry me?" he asked.

Abandoning any hope of a "civilized" life back in Kansas, Marietta became Richard's wife, staying at his side through the last 14 eventful years of his life.

Inspiring trust by speaking their languages

Wetherill was a parcel of contradictions. Though he had never gone to college, he read widely and ambitiously. He was miserably insecure about his shortcomings as a scholar, yet his letters reveal a frank, clear prose that many an academic might emulate. A crack shot, he nonetheless, as a Quaker, often refused to carry a rifle even when he rode through hostile Indian country. He had the knack of inspiring trust among the Utes and Navajos, in part because he learned to speak well the languages of both tribes.

In 1902 the family bowed to the inevitable and sold Alamo Ranch. Meanwhile, Richard and Marietta and their infant son had moved to Chaco Canyon, where



Handsome masonry marks 600-plus rooms of Pueblo Bonito, which Wetherill began excavating in 1896.

the rancher built a trading post next to Pueblo Bonito. Masoned with the finest Anasazi stonework ever seen, Pueblo Bonito incorporates astronomical alignments and stands at the center of a mysterious network of far-reaching Anasazi roads.

No archaeologist had ever touched this colossal ruin of some 600 rooms. Here, in 1896, Wetherill had gone to work with a will. He had won the steady patronage of Talbot and Frederick Hyde, millionaire brothers from New York. Incorporated as the Hyde Exploring Expedition, Wetherill dug 190 rooms at Pueblo Bonito over four years and shipped tens of thousands of artifacts to New York, which the Hydes donated to the American Museum of Natural History.

Inevitably, Wetherill's one-man monopoly of what was coming to be recognized as the most important Anasazi site in the Southwest aroused professional attention. A campaign to halt his unsupervised research was launched by Edgar L. Hewett, president of New Mexico Normal University and an archaeologist who had his own eye on Chaco. Decrying Wetherill's work as mere "vandalizing," Hewett persuaded the General Land Office to launch an investigation of the cowboy's doings. The upshot of the prolonged inquiry was dramatic: in 1902 Richard Wetherill was forbidden to dig at Chaco. For the last eight years of his life, the self-taught archae-

Cave 7 yielded an earlier phase of Anasazi culture, that of Basketmakers–and evidence of a massacre.

"Reverse archaeologist" Fred Blackburn, guide Tommy May, rest at Sandal House; "CW" was Clate Wetherill.

ologist turned not another shovelful of Anasazi soil.

Despite Hewett's antipathy, at Chaco Culture National Historical Park Wetherill's memory is now honored. Says Chief of Interpretation Kim McLean, "As far as archaeology is concerned, Wetherill's work was as good as or better than that of many professionals of his day."

Over the years, the criticisms of Nusbaum, Hewett and others have taken their toll on Richard Wetherill's reputation. Yet the strictures of his detractors are balanced by the praises of some of the Southwest's leading archaeologists. In 1946 John Otis Brew, of Harvard's Peabody Museum, hailed the sum of Wetherill's work as "the most far-reaching single event in Southwestern archaeology." Last spring Jeffrey Dean, of the University of Arizona's Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research in Tucson, told me, "Wetherill was a far better archaeologist than"–Dean then named a well-regarded archaeologist whose career overlapped Wetherill's.

Much of the credit for the rehabilitating of Wetherill's name belongs to a loose band of Westerners–nearly all of them amateurs in archaeology, as Wetherill himself was–who call themselves the Wetherill-Grand Gulch Research Project. Their central figure is 43-year-old Fred Blackburn, a feisty wilderness guide and educator who lives in Cortez, Colorado. In the 1970s, as a Bureau of Land Management ranger in Grand Gulch, Utah, Blackburn became preoccupied with retracing the rancher's footsteps across the Southwest.

The cloud over Wetherill's name had much to do with certain museums' negligence in handling his field

Wetherill's photograph shows Basketmaker skulls in foreground, pottery ollas of later Pueblo dwellers.

Archaeologist Winston Hurst makes notes in Cave 7, rediscovered by Wetherill-Grand Gulch Project in 1990.

notes and glass-plate photographs. Without good records of provenance–the stratigraphic context of each artifact in its original site–matchless collections like the ones Wetherill gathered reduce to little more than grab bags of pretty objects.

Blackburn and his colleagues learned, however, that in most cases the notes and photographs still existed. The team realized that it might be possible to relink the artifacts in the museums with their provenances. This sort of "reverse archaeology"–the term is Blackburn's coinage–could hold a vast potential for rejuvenating "dead" collections.

The effort depended crucially on Blackburn's deep knowledge of the obscure topography the cowboy had explored: he could peer at a photograph that Wetherill had made in 1893 and say, "Oh, that's Fishmouth Cave, back of Butler Wash." But the project had a hard time getting a foot in the door at Eastern museums. Curators used to dealing with doctoral candidates looked askance at the uncredentialed pleadings of a band of apparent dilettantes. And, as the team came to recognize, its own proposals were rife with naiveté and imprecision.

From 1986 on, the initially testy back-and-forth between the project and the museums gradually thawed into a good working arrangement. As Anibal Rodriguez, senior technician for anthropology at the American Museum of Natural History, recalls, "They were so ambitious, we finally realized the best thing for us to do was listen, to see what they had to offer."

Last June, Blackburn and another project member, archaeologist Winston Hurst, gave photographer Terrence Moore and me a vivid demonstration of the fruits of reverse archaeology as they guided us on a hike into Whiskers Draw, a minor tributary of Cottonwood Wash in southeastern Utah.

One hundred years ago this month, Wetherill made perhaps his greatest discovery. Working in an unprepossessing rock shelter he called Cave 7, he dug beneath a scattering of Anasazi relics, the likes of which he had found many a time. Finally, five feet down, he began to uncover something remarkable. The cave was riddled with bottle-shaped pits that had been used as burial cists. Eventually Wetherill unearthed more than 90 skeletons in Cave 7. Some four-fifths of them showed evidence of violent harm, and scattered among the bones were many deadly flint points, including one embedded in a backbone.

The importance of Wetherill's discovery lay not in the skeletons per se, but in the cowboy's acute recognition that these deep-buried remains belonged to a different people from those he had found at Cliff Palace and other sites. Almost at once he put his finger on the crucial distinguishing characteristics. The earlier humans had no pottery but made superb baskets of yucca and willow, some woven so tightly they could hold water; they used the atlatl, or spear-thrower, rather than the bow and arrow; and they had round skulls, rather than the artificially flattened craniums of the later cliff dwellers (now known to have been caused by the use of hard cradleboards in infancy).

Anibal Rodriguez, of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, displays a grain basket made from closely woven strands of yucca; it is one of the many superb examples of the Anasazi arts in the museum's collection.

Wetherill used the term "Basket People," and the Hyde brothers coined the name "Basketmaker." Today, the distinction between the Basketmaker and the Pueblo phases of Anasazi culture–with the transition taking place around A.D. 700–is one of the cornerstones of Southwest archaeology. By correlating depth with prehistoric age, moreover, Wetherill took another intellectual leap. Six decades later, the great archaeologist Alfred V. Kidder tipped his hat to the Mancos rancher: "[Nels] Nelson and I have often been credited with doing the first stratigraphic work in the Southwest, but Richard, in recognizing the greater antiquity of the Basketmakers than that of the Cliff Dwellers, used the method many years before anyone else in that field."

After Wetherill's death, the location of Cave 7 was forgotten. In Frank McNitt's excellent biography *Richard Wetherill: Anasazi,* published in 1957, one of Wetherill's photographs of the site appeared, with a caption erroneously suggesting it was in Grand Gulch. Hurst, Blackburn and a few other members of the Wetherill Project became determined to find the cave again.

The search took two years. The sleuths had only a few tantalizing clues: a sketch map and description of the site among Wetherill's notes, a pair of photographs, and the heading of the letter in which the cowboy excitedly described his find to his patron back East: "First Valley Cottonwood Creek 30 Miles North Bluff City."

As Hurst and Blackburn took me into Whiskers Draw last June, I could appreciate what must have been the needle-in-a-haystack nature of the search for the ordinary-looking cave. It was a blazing day, with the temperature in the 90s; bullflies stung our arms, while tamarisk thickets lashed our faces as we bushwhacked up the draw. The surrounding country was crisscrossed for miles with mazes of virtually identical side canyons.

A crucial clue lay in the dated signatures Wetherill and his cohorts were wont to scrawl in charcoal or scratch with a bullet cartridge on the cave walls. To later generations, these inscriptions have often seemed offensive graffiti; at Mesa Verde, a number of Wetherill signatures were effaced in the 1950s or '60s. Yet in the 1890s, to leave one's name on an archaeological site was the normal practice, followed by professional excavators and government explorers alike. The deed amounted to no mere braggart "Kilroy was here"; it was an integral part of the documentation of the dig.

As Hurst's team searched the tributaries of Cottonwood Wash, the dates got "warm," clustering within days of December 17, 1893–the date on the letter to Wetherill's patron. But as it turned out, the real Cave 7 was the very last of all the possible rock shelters Hurst and his colleagues looked into. With the photograph from McNitt's book in hand, I stood on the exact spot where Wetherill had exposed the glass plate in 1893. The crumbling Pueblo wall on the left still stood, albeit more ravaged than a century before. In the old picture, Basketmaker skulls litter the floor of the cave. Now I could see the deep depressions in the dirt, a mute memorial to the 90 skeletons Wetherill had extracted.

Before the team relocated Cave 7, Christy Turner of Arizona State University, the leading expert on Anasazi cannibalism (a phenomenon revealed only within the past decade), traveled to the American Museum of Natural History where he examined the very bones and pro-

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jectile points Wetherill had dug out of the cave nearly a century before. Reintegrating the site and the artifacts, Turner and Hurst demonstrated that Cave 7 had been the scene of a wholesale massacre some 1,500 years ago; the carnage involved stabbing by daggers, shooting with atlatl darts, bludgeoning, scalping, possibly even torture.

Hurst and Turner's work represents a major step in revealing what one might call the dark side of Anasazi culture–its occasional propensity to erupt into internecine violence. As the two archaeologists write in a forthcoming paper, the evidence from Cave 7 "document[s] yet another example of our species' strange capacity for both terrible destructiveness and the creation of beautiful works of art."

As the Wetherill Project's work gathered steam after 1986, some of the leading Anasazi archaeologists, such as Turner, Brigham Young University's Joel Janetski and Washington State University's William Lipe, began to collaborate with these hardworking amateurs. The project's focus became the Basketmakers. Scholars had done less work on those early Anasazi than on the more accessible Pueblo people succeeding them. The culmination of this effort was a three-day scholarly symposium on the Basketmakers, held in Blanding, Utah, in 1990. With some 500 participants, it was arguably the best-attended Anasazi conference ever. The papers from the symposium have been published in book form by the BLM Utah Cultural Resource Series. In addition, Blackburn and archaeoastronomer Ray Williamson have written *In Search of the Basketmaker,* a scholarly overview to be published next year by the School of American Research. And in 1995 the Utah Museum of Natural History will mount an exhibition on the Basketmakers featuring the project's work.

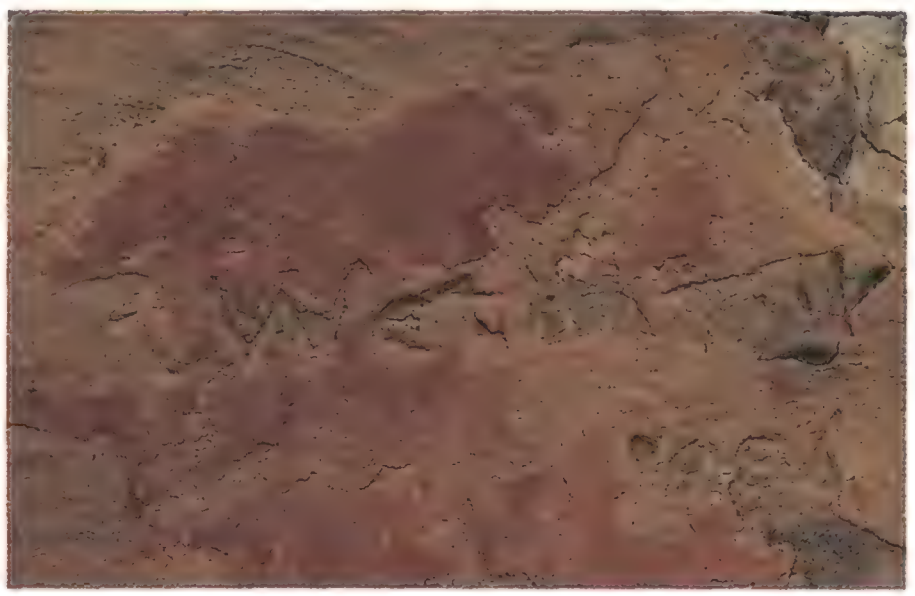
The rehabilitation of the Wetherill name has meant much to the brothers' descendants. Last June I met 63-year-old Tom Wetherill, the grandson of Richard's brother Al. A contractor living in Farmington, New Mexico, Tom has inherited the family records. Opening the yellowed pages of the Alamo Ranch guest register, he showed me Nordenskiold's signature from 1891.

A week later, photographer Moore and I were joined by Fred Blackburn and Marietta Davenport on a jaunt into Grand Gulch. Marietta, named for her great-grandmother, is an archaeologist employed by the U.S. Forest Service. All through college and graduate school she heard her professors cast aspersions on Richard Wetherill. "I wouldn't say anything in class," Marietta recalled. "Afterwards I'd go up to the professor and say, 'Wait a minute, let's talk about this.' I wouldn't let on right away that Richard was my great-grandfather."

Winding our way into Bullet Canyon, a tributary of Grand Gulch, we retraced the stock trail, now faint, that Wetherill had built in 1893 and that Blackburn's team had rediscovered a few years ago. By midafternoon we had reached Jailhouse Ruin, one of the eeriest of all Anasazi sites in Grand Gulch, where huge, baleful "full-moon" pictographs dominate an airy, masoned ledge. It was a glorious, hot afternoon, with canyon wrens singing on the breeze. As we sat on the bedrock sandstone below the ruin, Marietta said quietly, "It's pretty exciting for me to visit a site he dug. It's very powerful."

We camped out, then spent the next day in Sheik's Canyon, another Grand Gulch tributary. By midday we reached Green Mask Spring, a Basketmaker site so profusely decorated with pictographs that in four hours of staring we only began to sort out the enigmatic paintings. Here Wetherill had camped in January 1897.

One evening as dusk approached, Wetherill had dug behind some rocks against the cliff. The burial he uncov-



Anthropomorphic figures painted onto cliff (left) stand guard near where "Princess" was found. Wetherill cut his signature (above), following a 19th-century practice.

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Misspelling of his name on tombstone was just the first of many indignities Wetherill's memory has suffered.

ered, working into the night by lantern, would be the most striking find in all his years of Anasazi work. A 66-inch-wide basket covered another; under them lay a turkey-feather blanket decorated with bluebird feathers, and another blanket spangled with canary yellow spots. A final basket covered the perfectly mummified head of a woman. Her body was painted yellow, her face red.

The stunned archaeologist nicknamed his discovery "the Princess." Wetherill had found many a mummy, but never did he excavate one more carefully or pack one more delicately to be carried out of Grand Gulch and back to Durango and the railroad East.

Using Wetherill's field notes and photographs, Blackburn's team had been able to pinpoint the pit at Green Mask Spring from which the Princess had been removed. Now I stood on the spot and pondered a pair of haunting pictographs that had been painted directly above the grave. The androgynous human figures in white, each decorated with a red circle covering its chest, stood solemn and rigid, side by side, almost like some bridal couple. Here was another tantalizing promise spun out of reverse archaeology. Almost nowhere in the world has rock art been convincingly associated with burials. Yet if these pictographs commemorated the woman buried beneath them, then the paintings themselves might tell us more about the Princess–and vice versa.

Two weeks later, Terrence Moore and I went to New York City to view a pair of Wetherill collections. At the American Museum of Natural History, Anibal Rodriguez opened many drawers of Wetherill materials: splendid Chaco black-on-white pots, intricately woven baskets, atlatls, cradleboards and rabbit clubs.

The next day we visited the research branch of the National Museum of the American Indian in The Bronx. Assistant collections manager Mark Clark pulled out a dazzling variety of fine Anasazi artifacts: blankets made of rabbit fur, splendidly woven willow baskets with checkerboard red-and-black designs, scrapers made from bighorn sheep horns, black lignite beads that had once been strung as a necklace, bowls shaped like pipes.

Barred from digging after 1902, Wetherill stayed on at his Chaco Canyon trading post. No white settlement in the United States lay farther from the beaten path. For Marietta, these were hard years, but Richard was in his element. As he traded regularly with the Chaco Navajos, he got to know these former nomads better than any white man ever had. Realizing the quality of the best Navajo rugs and blankets, Wetherill encouraged the weavers by crossbreeding sheep to produce an animal that bore a better wool.

Trouble struck one day in June 1910. A dispute between Wetherill and several Navajos flared out of control. At sunset, as Wetherill drove cows along the Chaco Canyon wash, a young Navajo man raised his rifle. The first bullet struck Wetherill in the chest; a second, from close range, blew half his face away.

Last June I hiked with Fred Blackburn to Sandal House. Here, a dozen miles down the Mancos River from Alamo Ranch, the Wetherills had dug in their first ruin a few years before the discovery of Cliff Palace. Naming the site for the scores of yucca sandals they unearthed, they caught the bug of Anasazi exploration.

Sandal House lies only five miles east of thronged Cliff Palace, yet it is in Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Park, can be approached only with a Ute guide and is almost never visited. Blackburn himself had never been there.

Now, sketch pad in hand, he found on the cave's walls the signatures or initials of four of the five Wetherill brothers; no other site had yielded so many. And he discovered his first "Mamie Palmer," Marietta's maiden name, carved in neat capitals that summer when she first got to know the gruff cowboy.

After two hours of inching our way through the jumbled ruin our Ute guide, Tommy May, found a very faint inscription written in pencil on a stone in a kiva wall. Blackburn squatted in the rubble and flashed mirrored light across the evanescent message. After half an hour he had sketched out the memorandum: Wetherill had found a huge Anasazi pot, which he was caching in the ruin and would return to retrieve in four days. Blackburn paused, wiped his sweaty brow with a bandana and said to no one in particular, "This is as close as we're ever going to get to talking to him."

A small Basketmaker site nestles beneath a sweeping cliff in a cirque located in Whiskers Draw, Utah.

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By Helen Dudar

At the Louvre, art lives on among the growing pains

A decade into the latest renovation–and 200 years after the famed museum opened its doors to the common people–the dust is still flying

The widow lady from Troy, New York, was offended, indeed seriously shocked. For some months of 1830-31, Emma Willard was in residence in Paris. She had, of course, toured the Louvre Museum–or perhaps only as much of it as a virtuous person could endure. As her journal would report, the place was an offense against decency, its walls crowded with works more suitable to dens of iniquity than to a public collection of art. Now, Emma Willard was an early feminist, a pioneer educator of women; don't even ask how she could have known anything about the decor of iniquitous dens. It is likely that she was shaken by images of naked creatures celebrating a few of life's pleasures. Even more offensive was the cavalier way in which sacred and profane works were allowed to mingle. In Mrs. Willard's eyes, the morality of all Paris was imperiled.

Sixteen decades later, the relentlessly modernized Louvre is not so much a shock as a bombardment of surprises. One recent season, a devotee of vintage monster films could take in *King Kong* and *Godzilla* in a single sitting or spend an entire day listening to expert discussions of the iconoclastic American architect Frank Gehry, perhaps hoping for a gorilla to appear. In the fairly new, immense underground-entrance space below I. M. Pei's celebrated glass Pyramid (p. 53), dedicated shoppers roamed through boutiques crammed with expensive knickknackery and shawls priced at $300. There were not only cafés for light bites but a gourmet restaurant where, at last, a finicky diner could encounter what national standards currently consider a "correct meal"; there were concerts and art lectures and a post office handy for mailing souvenir cards; there were stacks of videocassettes on Louvre masterworks turned out with Hollywoodian finesse by a new department of cultural affairs.

And borrowing a leaf from enterprising American museums, the Louvre was now available for private parties. On Tuesdays, when the museum is closed, the same subterranean entrance area known as the Cour

The *Venus de Milo*–one of the six masterworks on the must-see list of the Louvre's annual five million visitors–arrived in 1821 after being dug up by French archaeologists working in the Mediterranean basin.

Napoléon, which displays no art that might be endangered by revelers, may be rented for dinners for a maximum of 1,000 persons. The price: $50,000 to $100,000.

If there is any trauma in the renewal of this storied institution, it is to be suffered in its acreage–miles of hard flooring to be traversed by a serious visitor bent on exploring riches beyond the *Mona Lisa* and the *Winged Victory*. Ten years into what has, without exaggeration, been called the Grand Louvre project–at a cost that has so far scaled the $1 billion mark–the place is bigger than ever and still growing.

In November the museum at last became the sole occupant of the rambling old palace it calls home. It occupied and opened the Richelieu Wing, the long arm of the building on the north side of the grounds. A shabby warren of offices that housed the French Ministry of Finance for more than a century had been gutted and transformed into an elegant sprawl of spaces for

Photographs by Yves Gellie

Traffic tieups in front of Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* are so frequent that the Louvre's curator of paintings, Pierre Rosenberg, has regretfully concluded that the work will have to be hung in a room of its own.

art–more than a hundred rooms. With the 39 others opened last year in another wing, the museum has doubled its exhibition space.

And there is still more. Inaugurated simultaneously with the Richelieu was an immense underground facility wearing the imposing title of the Carrousel du Louvre. For years now, at the western end of the museum grounds, workmen have been burrowing under the gardens known as the Carrousel. The place was a mess, a perpetual chaos of noise and dirt and disorder, embellished with hopeful signs promising an up-to-date array of amenities. The completed space has its own access to a Métro station and several museum necessities–a laboratory, an amphitheater–but its main purpose was to alleviate burdensome traffic problems.

Until this year, the busy thoroughfare along the Seine River on the south side of the Louvre has been cluttered with parked and double-parked tour buses, the vehicles that shepherd fully one-third of the daily visitors to the museum. Now, at last, underground parking space has been provided for 80 buses and 600 cars. And significantly, there is also space for 60 new shops. Because neither the city nor the state would come up with sufficient funds to pay for a parking installation, rent money from the boutiques, when they are fully leased, will eventually cover the high cost of building underground.

There is no progress without pain. In the quiet of cramped curatorial offices–17th-century rooms equipped with up-to-date computers–staff people sit worrying about the kind of unwelcome visitors this new shoppers' paradise is apt to attract. Not far from the Louvre is a similar underground mall, the Forum des Halles, which replaced the legendary wholesale food markets of Paris. It seems to house a floating population of *voyous*, young and vaguely menacing layabouts from the suburbs who spend hours just hanging around.

In its long, checkered history, the Louvre has survived worse, including the demanding tastes of 20 monarchs, most of whom lived elsewhere; the dictates of at least 15 architects who built, tore down and rebuilt segments of the palace for eight centuries; a few revolutions; several names, one of which was Palace of the People; serious

Paris-lover Helen Dudar wrote about artist Jean Dubuffet in the June SMITHSONIAN *and the Seattle Art Museum and Garth Fagan last year.*

fires; the untidy housekeeping of artists allowed to work there; and the greed of the Nazi invaders. In World War II, the Louvre's cherished contents were packed up and trucked to hiding places in chateaus scattered throughout the countryside.

The inauguration of two new major installations was timed to coincide with a significant anniversary–the bicentennial of the birth of the Louvre as a public institution. It formally opened November 18, 1793, at the end of the French Revolution, as the Central Museum of the Arts, with a collection of 538 works, most of them acquired by generations of French royalty. These were augmented by art that had lately been confiscated from cathedrals and the great homes of members of the nobility who had either fled or been parted from their heads. For a long time, the premises were primarily devoted to a small army of copyists–spiritual ancestors of the needy artists who today can still be found turning out clumsy replicas of great paintings. In the early years they were the only people allowed in daily; the general public could visit every ten days. Not long after the opening, the name was changed to the Napoleon Museum; the collection had been brilliantly enlarged by a conqueror who knew a thing or two about looting.

Packing up their national treasures

Neither the name nor Napoleon's booty would survive Waterloo. In an effort to savor all the stolen art before it was retrieved by the prior owners, in the summer of 1815 an English miniaturist named Andrew Robertson scooped up his spare cash and rushed to Paris. As he recounted in his journal, Robertson haunted the museum, hoping to see everything before the Italians, Prussians, Austrians, Spanish and Dutch, in turn, arrived and packed up their national treasures. To the French, their claims were a cultural insult. As one outraged Parisian insisted to the visiting artist, "France was the garden and cradle of the arts–the only place where these things ought to be. . . ." Actually, the repatriation efforts were not entirely completed. The Italians accepted a boring Charles Lebrun and left behind a first-rate Veronese; they took back inlaid marble tables and did not bother with so-called primitive works, which tastemakers of the period rejected as "barbarous." Over time, bequests, purchases and astute explorations would fill empty spaces and crowd basement storage rooms. The *Venus de Milo*, found by French archaeologists digging around the Mediterranean basin, arrived in 1821. For much of the 19th century, the French burrowed through ancient sites in the Middle East, shipping home masterworks of great pre-Islamic civilizations. The result is perhaps the largest and most diverse assemblage of art in the world.

Housing the works and showing them in improved surroundings proved to be a major priority for the president of France, François Mitterrand; the Grand Louvre project was the subject of his first press conference on taking office in 1981. It is invariably perceived as part of Mitterrand's "edifice complex"–he has launched a good number of building projects. On the other hand, the professionals who occupy the Louvre had been wringing their hands over space problems for half a century. As the museum's director, Michel Laclotte, puts it, "It was a dream for generations, from the 1930s on, to have the Richelieu"–the wing occupied until now by the Ministry of Finance.

It would take some time to persuade the ministry to relocate to new headquarters on the edge of Paris. For one two-year period, while the bureaucrats managed to delay their departure, construction work could be pursued only during the night hours, at great expense and inconvenience.

As urgently needed as the Richelieu Wing was a cen-

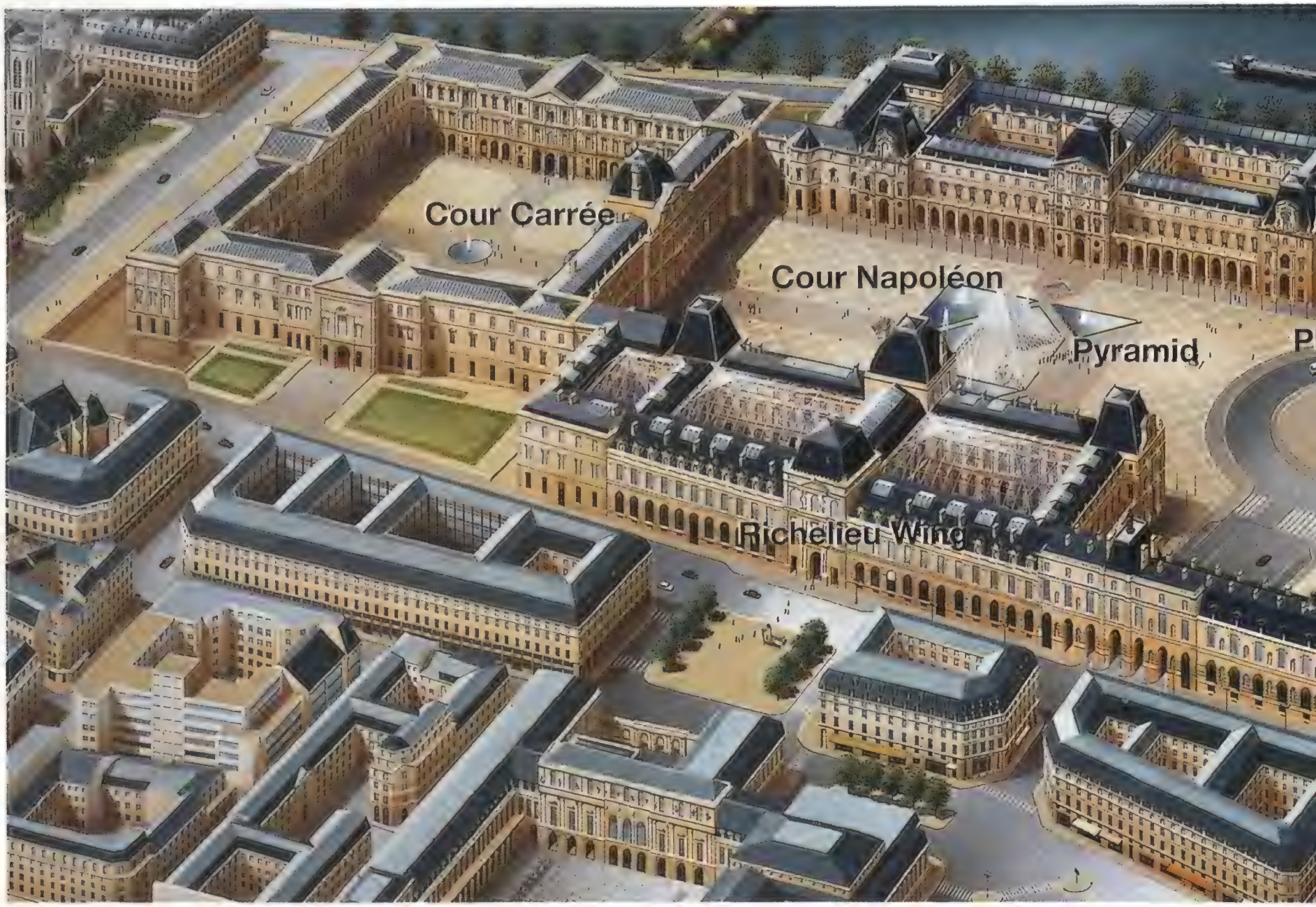
In a workshop, children mimic the positions of the key figures in Nicolas Poussin's *Judgment of Solomon.*

tral reception area. There were a half-dozen ways into the Louvre but no suitable gathering place for the large classes of chattering children and the big tour groups shepherded into the museum all day long; there was no auditorium for film, lecture and music programs; and there were hardly any of the merchandising facilities that today's museums thrive on. To find a workable solution and to oversee the platoon of architects who would eventually take on assignments for parts of the huge project, Mitterrand chose I. M. Pei, one of America's most distinguished architects, whose best-known design was probably the masterful East Building of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

Great space for new facilities was to be found only underground. For a time it looked as if nothing at all would rise on the surface of the court, but Pei felt that a marker of some kind was needed, a structure that could also bring daylight into the installation. He thought of domes, he toyed with cubes; he chose a pyramid, a 71-foot-high structure made with panes of clear glass that would reflect the ornate facades surrounding it and the ever-changing sky above. To say that the reaction was hostile scarcely describes the explosion of abuse that greeted his design. "Fit only for Disneyland!" and "The Luna Park of the Louvre!" the critics cried.

To this day, some Parisians insist the opposition was not wholly esthetic. Some of the anger was focused on the fact that Mitterrand had chosen his chief architect without competition (Pei does not participate in competitions). There was, as well, the automatic resistance of conservatives to a Socialist president's building ambitions. As one Parisian woman involved in the arts recalled, the opposition view was: "How dare Mitterrand touch the Louvre? How dare a Socialist do this?"

In Pei's New York office, the published insults are preserved in a foot-thick file. A man of resolute high spirits,

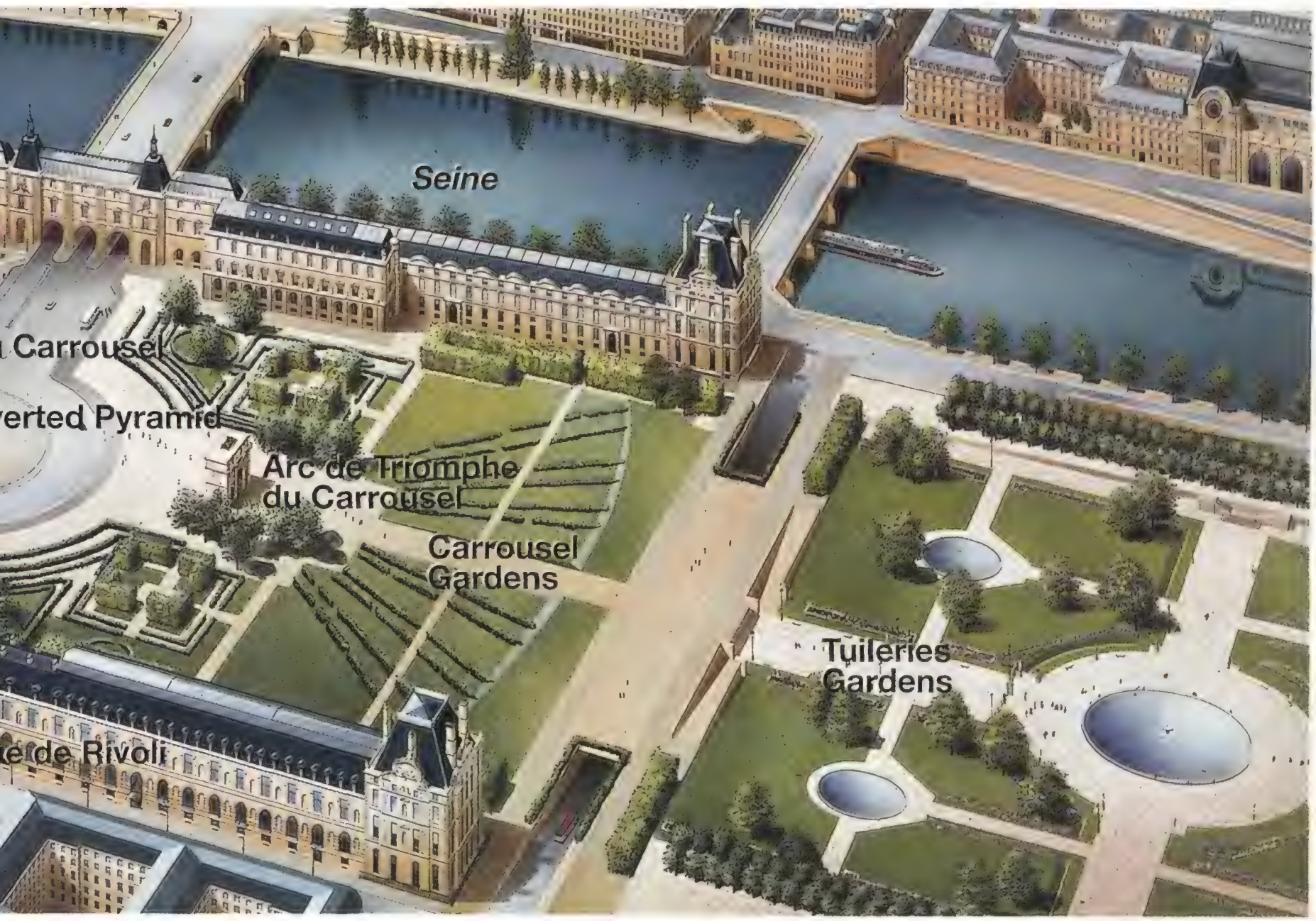


At the heart of Paris, its long arms open to the sunset, the Louvre has grown over eight centuries of tortuous transformation from a castle (now under the Cour Carrée) to one of the world's largest palatial complexes.

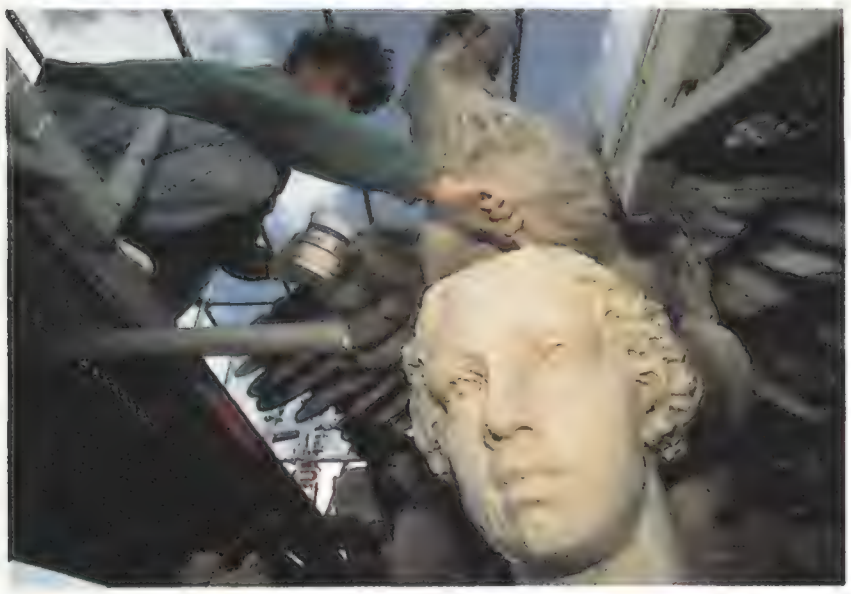
Pei now says with a laugh, "I was hurt but not mortally so." He had the firm support not only of the Mitterrand government but, eventually, of the entire Louvre staff. Still, in the early days, during frequent business trips to Paris, he could sense the public hostility even in casual encounters. Some of the animosity abated after a full-scale prototype, without glass, went up on the site in 1985, conveying a sense of what the courtyard would look like with this large, spare addition. And after the 1989 opening, public opinion was swiftly transformed. "People stopped me on the street and thanked me," Pei recalls. He would repeat himself brilliantly in the design for the Carrousel du Louvre. Daylight pours into that underground space through another big pyramid, this one inverted so that its point becomes a beacon in a great space.

Pyramid bashing has now faded, to be replaced by agitation over the Tuileries. The Grand Louvre project includes restoration of those splendid formal gardens that stretch from the museum grounds as far as the Place de la Concorde. Last spring, a citizens' group organized a protest, enlisting American support and contributions, with flyers that instructed the public on "How to Stop the Massacre." The victim of the massacre, in their eyes, was a piece of history–Le Nôtre's incomparable 17th-century gardens–and the means was their growing commercialization. In recent years, garden space has been rented out for three-week street fairs, a giant bookseller's exhibition and, last winter, what seemed to be the last straw–a skating rink.

As one architect involved in the project sums it up, the conflict is a battle between two groups: the functionaries who oversee the Tuileries and who, to support the gardens, will rent a plot to any entrepreneur able to pay congenial sums of francs for the privilege; and on the other side, the strict preservationists who don't want to



It has served officially as a museum only since 1793. With the Grand Louvre project, the Richelieu Wing joins the museum, and the Pyramid and underground facilities beneath the Carrousel Gardens have been built.



Faces of renovation in the Cour Napoléon: above, newly carved statue of French author Rabelais goes into place; below, other sculptures get final touches.

see anyone even walking on the grass. The resolution will likely be a compromise. The street fairs, popular events for children, have already been reduced from two a year to one.

Whatever pride Parisians take in the Louvre is hardly translated into a notable local presence in its galleries. Since the Pyramid reception hall opened, the number of visitors has gone from three million a year to more than five million. The majority are foreign, and about one-seventh of all visitors are North American; the proportion from the city and suburbs is said to have risen from a sparse 31 percent to 36 percent. Even so, people in the businesses and professions of the arts insist that although they are often at the Louvre, their friends never go. Among knowledgeable residents there is an amiably cynical rule that residents of this culture-ridden city turn up at the Pyramid in large numbers, lunch in the gourmet restaurant, take in a lecture or film, pause to inspect the glorious bookshop and go home without ever having stopped to inspect a work of art.

Apparently many do not even wander beyond the great entrance hall for the short walk to one of the newest–and oldest–works on display. Even before digging began, French archaeologists told Pei and the builders that they would find vestiges of the first royal dwelling on the grounds. What the excavation actually uncovered were substantial sections of walls, towers and wells of the austere 12th-century fortified castle that was the first Louvre–an impressive and

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strangely touching remnant of the city's early history.

Recent innovations trouble some Louvre professionals. Without prompting, a curator suddenly offers an explanation for an unexpected detail on the Louvre's one-page map. Published in six languages and color-coded to help tourists find their way through confusing spaces, it provides the precise location of six masterworks that many first-time visitors feel it is crucial to see–among them, the *Mona Lisa*, the *Venus de Milo* and the *Winged Victory*. No museum is happy to encourage tourists to proceed through the building at a gallop primarily or exclusively in order to stand before a half-dozen celebrated pieces. But something had to be done for the peace of mind of those staff members who preside over the information desk: they were bored beyond endurance by the number of tourists wanting directions to those works.

In fact, the museum administration appears to be singularly attentive to the comforts of its 1,300 employees. Michel Laclotte, a small, brisk, unpretentious man, is the first scholar ever to head the museum, and one would expect his interests to focus chiefly on the art inventory and its proper display. Nevertheless, since his arrival the Louvre has found room for an employee health club complete with weight machines, a lending library and a part-time social worker available to help staff members with financial or domestic problems.

Of the six stellar pieces listed on the map, Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* is not only a point of pride but a source of torment. Posing the question as "one of the crucial issues" confronting the museum, his words edged in irony, Pierre Rosenberg, the Louvre's curator of paintings, asks, "What are we to do with the terrible *Mona Lisa*?" With her faint cryptic smile and her sly eyes, this 16th-century portrait is an object of great beauty and greater fame, rendered even more famous by theft. In 1911 it was stolen and kept hidden for two years by an Italian workman who thought it belonged back home where its model had lived.

In high tourist season, when the noise level and the crowds in the Pyramid reception hall resemble the Miami airport on Christmas travel days, the groups of guided tourists rooted before the painting create day-long bottlenecks. Their presence makes it a chore to

In the restoration laboratory, above the Cour Carrée, conservators go about their meticulous work on some of the paintings in the Louvre's vast collection. Extensive research precedes the start of any project.

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move through the Grand Gallery and nearly impossible to approach the art on neighboring walls. In fact, one of the few depressing sights in the Louvre is to observe visitors gazing raptly at the portrait and scarcely casting a glance at two splendid Leonardo paintings that hang nearby, the *Virgin of the Rocks* and the *Virgin and Child with Saint Anne.*

Rosenberg has finally concluded that the only solution is to give the *Mona Lisa* a room of its own. "It is a little bit sad," he notes. After all, what a museum of this size has to offer is context–a number of major works by a master, in the company of the paintings of some of his important teachers and followers. In this case, however, the obligation to educate has been vanquished by human traffic problems.

By Rosenberg's estimate, the range and depth of the Louvre's painting collection is matched only by the National Gallery in London. The public had a chance to experience the depth at the end of 1992 when the Louvre opened 39 refurbished rooms in the Cour Carrée, the oldest part of the museum, showing only 18th- and 19th-century works of French art. One-fifth of the exhibition had been in storage for years.

Reviews were mixed. Some critics thought the installations were entirely wonderful, "a sumptuous gift." A serious French arts magazine complained about the murky colors of the painted walls–too dark–and suggested that under the natural lighting some still lifes looked as if they were in an "advanced state of decomposition." Interspersed among pieces by such important painters as David and Ingres were fairly underwhelming efforts by such secondary figures as Flandrin and Chassériau. In all, the galleries show 700 paintings, about a hundred pastels, drawings and miniatures, and a captivating three-walled woodland scene executed by Corot for the bathroom of a patron's home. Taking in the entire survey of two centuries of art in a single visit is something like consuming three gourmet meals in one day.

But the Louvre was not meant for visual snacking. The new Richelieu installation is a feast: 860 paintings of the Northern European school, including the Dutch, Flemish and German treasures in the collection; 3,000 large and small antiquities from the Middle Eastern excavations; 33 rooms of French sculpture; a string of rooms for a prime collection of objects of decorative art–among them, at last, the space to hang 80 large, rare Renaissance tapestries.

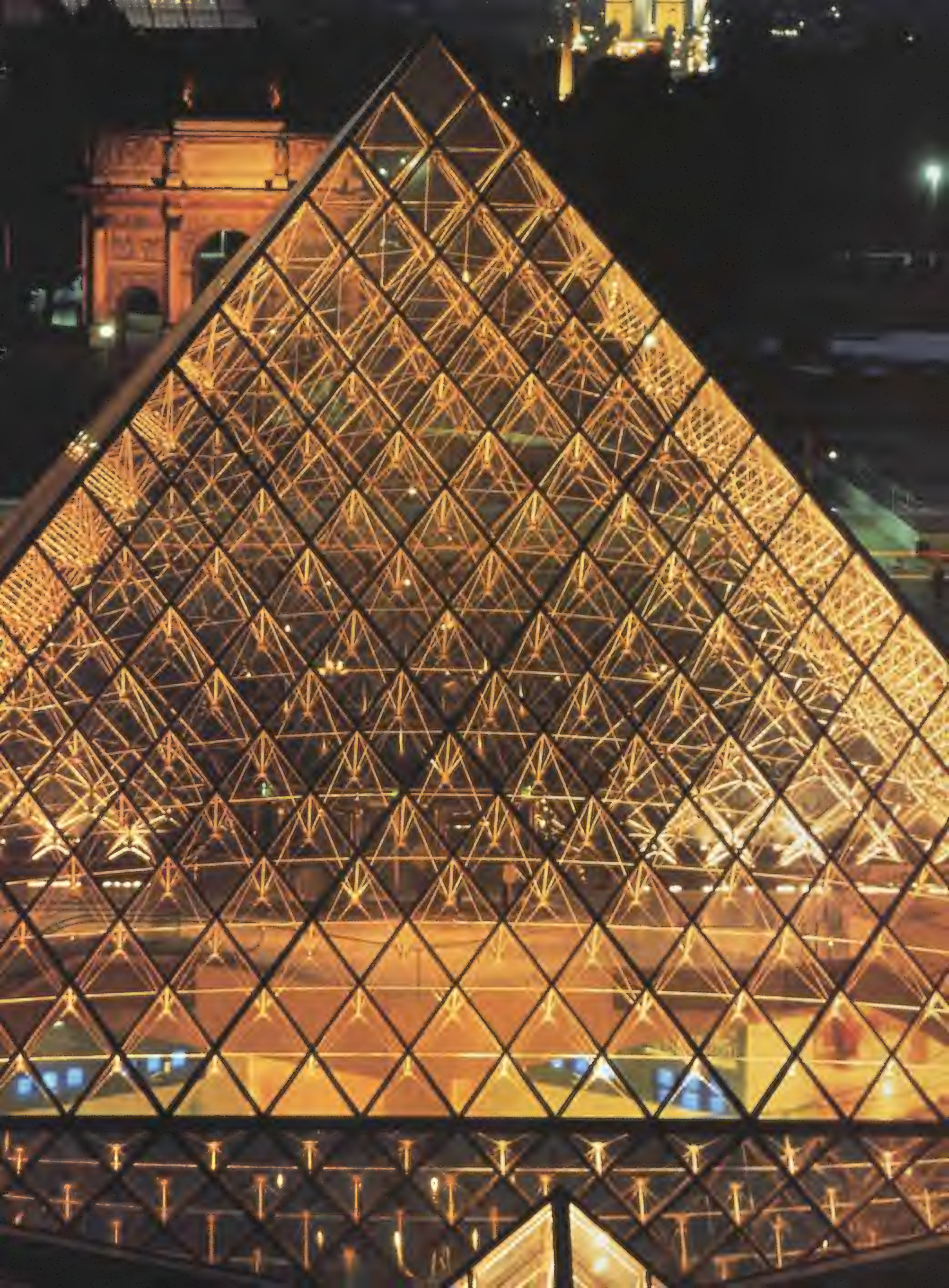
Interestingly, it was a sudden inspiration for the Richelieu in the planning stage that Pei believes won him the unwavering support he needed from key figures at the museum. In the hard winter days of 1982, bruised by the fierce attacks on his designs, Pei went off to Arcachon, a summer resort in southwestern France, to talk things over with the Louvre staff and with Emile Biasini, the agile civil servant whom Mitterrand had chosen to coordinate the project for the government. The Richelieu had one small and two large courtyards where Ministry of Finance functionaries habitually parked their cars. Pei proposed installing glass roofs over them so that the museum could use those gloriously decorated spaces to display large works of sculpture, including some eroded outdoor pieces removed from the adjoining Tuileries. The smaller space would be set aside for some of the rare pieces from the Middle East.

It was, he says now, one of those obvious lightning-bolt solutions that, with luck, arrive in an architect's moments of desperation. If the Louvre leadership had been vacillating about his ideas, it became at that moment a solid constituency for Pei's leadership.

For Pei and other architects, work will continue for at least another three years, possibly four, before the Grand Louvre project is officially over. Air-conditioning remains to be installed in some galleries, art to be moved into refurbished rooms, offices to be created for such recent operations as the cultural affairs department, whose staff still labors in an incongruous prefabricated building planted on the grounds.

Theoretically, the construction rigs and the workmen should be gone by 1997. But nobody believes it. Pierre Rosenberg is given to saying that, like the great castles and manor houses of Europe that are eternally engaged in addition and renovation, the Louvre will forever be a work in progress. Michel Laclotte is wryly certain that when the last picture has been hung and the last piece of carved ivory placed in its glass case, the curators of all seven departments will probably be heard complaining that they *must* have space, more space.

The Louvre's 71-foot-high Pyramid was designed by I. M. Pei; it is the newest jewel of the Paris night.



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By John F. Ross

So, can you say 'butter' and not move your mouth?

A real lip twister. But with tricks that go all the way back to Aesop and Aristophanes, ventriloquists can do it with a poker face

Fiddling with a radio atop the television set, Nacho Estrada twists the dials; it shrieks with loud whines, pops and other grating electronic sounds. A nervous silence fills the crowded hotel room. "Turn the thing off," I think, secretly embarrassed for the man.

But then, as he looks up and steps back, the sounds continue. He grins at me and the noise fades to a buzz, then disappears. I notice that the radio has been turned off the entire time. I've just had my first lesson in the celebrated art of "throwing" one's voice, here at the 19th Annual International Ventriloquist Convention in Fort Mitchell, Kentucky. Though I know he pulled a fast one, my eyes and ears still refuse to believe it.

Estrada, a Mexican-American from the Southwest, is an inveterate prankster, a standout at a convention of professional and amateur comedians and their sidekicks. Thus far at the conference, located in this small town across the Ohio River from Cincinnati, I have seen nothing of the classic ventriloquism of the 1950s. For the next three days, several hundred ventriloquists, many with a figure in tow, will wander the halls of the Drawbridge Estate, getting double takes and dropped mouths from the hotel staff and those attending more traditional meetings. Here, "vents" will learn tricks of the trade, exchange gossip and relax.

But, where, I want to know, is Charlie McCarthy, the wiseacre young Irish lad perched on a man's knee, spouting hokey puns? How about the Lamb Chop and Mortimer Snerd figures from my childhood, and dumb-faced Knucklehead Smiff and Danny O'Day?

"Vents" and their figures ham it up at last summer's 19th Annual International Ventriloquist Convention.

Characters run the gamut from Elvira Nosegay (front row, far left), who likes to "wink lasciviously at no one in general," to bears, grandmas, an angel, a dragon, dogs, a duck with a polka-dot tie–even a talking book.

Photographs by Theo Westenberger

All: Alan Ende Ventriloquist Collection

From left, Lars Lundquist (a figure of Edgar Bergen's), Carrot Top (on Lars' lap) and Dopey were created in the 1940s; woman and man are from England in the 1890s. Vents gave them life with the "near voice" and lip control.

Then I spot Elvira Nosegay sitting on a sofa, an older woman, heavily rouged, with a moronic smirk on her face as though a wicked thought had flashed through her wooden head after she had swilled too much bubbly. I sit down next to her. "That Nacho's quite a kidder," yucks Elvira with a slightly nasal voice. I feel silly talking to a piece of grandly painted fiberglass, but I nod in assent. More chuckles from the vents in the room. I've just had my second lesson–the "near voice."

I jump when the ventriloquist, Bob Ladd of Virginia, says, "Feel like a dummy, huh?" Most vents, Ladd included, will correct you if you use the term "dummy" to describe their "figures." Still, they're apt to slip up every now and then. Press them too hard on this topic, and a vent's figure is likely to spout back some comment such as "You're the dummy, not me" or "Oh, I get it, so you're politically correct. Then, just call me vocally impaired." Without hesitation, Ladd then disengages Elvira's head from her body and hands me the oversize head attached to a long, sweat-stained plastic shaft. I grip the rounded shaft and pull one of the levers located on it: Elvira "winks lasciviously at no one in general," as Ladd puts it. Unwittingly, a high-pitched voice escapes my lips, a woman's voice that startles even me. For a moment I'm 11 again, sitting patiently in front of the mirror in my bedroom, trying desperately not to move my lips and to talk in funny voices at the same time.

I can still remember the small advertisement appearing in the back of a well-thumbed comic book, a simple line drawing featuring a young boy who confounds a man with a trunk on his back by making a voice seem to come from within it. Eagerly I stalk the mailbox, awaiting the arrival of my ventriloquist's aid, which turns out to be a bent piece of metal that I'm instructed to place on the roof of my mouth. The best I can manage out of several hours of practice and staring into the mirror is a buzzing noise and sore lips. To me, ventriloquism stands for those preadolescent yearnings, a mix of frustration and untold promise, mystery and excitement, all amid a hazy memory of the early days of black-and-white television and the *Ed Sullivan Show.*

Certainly those experiences don't prepare me for Nick Pawlow's stage act at the ventriloquists' convention. The vent from Philadelphia brings his figure out, covered with tinfoil, mumbling how it's just come from the hotel's kitchen. Underneath the foil lies a cooked pig, dark brown and glazed, atop a platter and a bed of lettuce. It makes a wild ruckus, trying to talk with an apple shoved in its mouth. When Pawlow pulls out the apple, the pig shouts, "I'm really steamed!" and then, "You're dead meat!" That's when Pawlow answers, "No, *you're* dead meat!" The gags continue at a frenzied pace,

John Ross, who is based in Chevy Chase, Maryland, writes for print and television media. His last article for SMITHSONIAN *was about amber (January 1993).*

The art of ventriloquism is booming, and so is puppet making–the best figures can cost $3,000 to create.

culminating as Pawlow eats the eyes, which are raisins, and the laughs roll right on top of one another.

Just about anything with a mouth is fair game. "It used to be that the crowds would only believe the wooden characters," says veteran vent Jimmy Nelson, who, with his figure Danny O'Day, was a regular on the *Ed Sullivan Show* in the 1950s. Today's figures run the gamut from the cooked pig, a talking toilet, a fuzzy chicken with neon feathers and a fire-breathing dragon named Scorch, to soft Muppet-like figures, including sumo wrestlers, genies, King Tut and punked-out teenagers. Baby boomers too young to remember Edgar Bergen's famous radio act in the 1940s are watching Shari Lewis' PBS program *Lamb Chop's Play-Along* with their children. And a new generation of talented young vents is making its way into comedy clubs and cable programming. Ventriloquism mail-order king Clinton Detweiler believes these are the factors that have enabled his business, founded in 1934, to increase by almost 50 percent over the past two years.

While professional vents still ply more traditional venues–cruise ships, Las Vegas hotels, and comedy clubs–new venues, such as churches, corporate offices and schools, have also emerged. Gospel ventriloquism is one of the fastest growth sectors in the art–about 50 to 70 percent of his business, according to Detweiler. Liz and Dale VonSeggen run a highly successful company, One Way Street, which coordinates regional puppet festivals, and sells materials and advice to churches interested in starting their own "puppet ministries." In late 20th-century lexicon, ventriloquism is a communications tool.

Take Buddy Big Mountain (p. 60), who teaches anti-drug messages and AIDS awareness to children and adults at tribal reservations all over the country. Born in New Jersey, he's part Mohawk, Comanche, Apache and Welsh. With his ponytail, broad shoulders and disarming grin, he affects a deadpan delivery that catches the audience off guard.

In his AIDS awareness routine, Big Mountain asks his favorite character, a soft puppet named Wendell, what he'd do if his best friend were HIV positive. "Shoot 'im?" Wendell replies. "No," laughs Buddy. "Hang 'im?" "No, no!" says Buddy. "Hang 'im, then shoot 'im?" "No, Wendell!" Buddy then gives Wendell the facts about how the disease is–and is not–transmitted, and later tells me, "They laugh now, but you hope they'll think about the problem later."

Vent Dale Brown, with his figure, Chip Martin, finds the same thing performing his corporate gigs. With a mix of education and entertainment, he can roast the CEOs of America's top companies while they're watching from the front row. It boils down to what the Greek fabulist Aesop achieved: by telling metaphorical or moral parables through the mouths of animals, he was able to give advice to the king without appearing to do so. This technique often strikes deep chords. One of America's most successful vents, Ronn Lucas (p. 62) believes that ventriloquism interests us because of the vents' knack for picking up the different voices floating around in our heads. And because of their ability to play on the ways we fragment our own lives, talking differently to our mothers, fathers, friends, bosses and children.

A knife-wielding dummy run amok

Paradoxically, it's this ability to talk in different voices that brings a vent not only his success but his bad rap, too. The more real the character, the more the audience will presume that the vent must also believe the illusion in its entirety. You can't blame an audience for imagining that conversations go on between the vent and figure long after the end of the show–secret powwows in the cluttered quarters of the dressing room beneath the glare of a naked light bulb. And it doesn't take the imagination of Stephen King to push a little beyond this scenario and visualize the malevolent figure run amok, the terrifying theme of the 1978 film *Magic*, with its sinister, knife-wielding dummy Fats. It's as if that evil little voice inside us that urges us to do outrageous things is suddenly given form and an outward expression–free to do all that good manners, guilt and civiliza-

With Wendell, vent Buddy Big Mountain brings laughs and a message about alcohol abuse to young residents of the Jemez Pueblo, near Albuquerque. Ventriloquism is also used to teach kids AIDS awareness and the Gospel.

tion forbid. Working vents, who spend a great deal of energy creating the illusion of reality in their figures, groan when the subject of *Magic* comes up, believing that it has given ventriloquism a bad name.

No myth about ventriloquism is more popular, however, than the one about the vent gone berserk, convinced that his figure is real. Erich von Stroheim immortalized it earlier this century in the *The Great Gabbo*, a 1929 film adaptation of the Ben Hecht short story. In the tale, a vent goes mad, attacking and destroying his dummy, and then spends the rest of his life on the run, under the delusion that he is on the lam for committing murder.

Real-life instances have also contributed to the strange public perceptions of ventriloquists; for example, the case of the vent's wife who sued her husband, Herbert Dexter, for divorce in the 1930s and named his figure Charlie as corespondent. Court proceedings unraveled a sordid tale of an unhappy threesome, in which Dexter spent more time with Charlie than with his wife and used him to taunt her with cruel barbs. She began to have "homicidal" thoughts about Charlie, fearing that "I would have thrown him out of the window, had I been able to unlock the coffin-like trunk in which he was kept." The judge granted a divorce. Other stories are legion–vents who are buried with their figures or who leave them money in their wills.

Whatever happens offstage, there are practical reasons why a vent must deal politely with his figure while onstage. One of the cardinal rules of ventriloquism–not

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to hit your figure or show too much anger–grows out of the recognition that the audience will always sympathize with the figure, never the vent. Jimmy Nelson echoes a common story among vents, of a drunk who was insulted by a vent's figure and stood up to do it bodily harm, only to be stopped by the audience, who rose to protect the wooden figure.

Professional wisdom says that the audience will stare at a vent's mouth for the first several minutes; then, once a believable character has been established, their attention will fall entirely on the figure itself. One cruise ship entertainer mentions that nine out of ten people who watch his performance do not recognize him the next day. The famed Edgar Bergen had terrible lip control, especially in later life, but his characters were so real and the illusion so strong that the audience disregarded the vent's particular shortcomings.

But, of course, there's no way around it: you've got to learn how to speak without moving your lips. If you're starting out and serious about it, chances are you'll send away for Maher's Home Ventriloquism Course, at a cost of $79.95, from Maher Studios in Littleton, Colorado. Inside are all the secrets of the art, information once kept closely guarded by the now defunct International Brotherhood of Ventriloquists but available these days to anyone who can write a check.

The kit, about the size of a thick coffee-table book, is stuffed full of 30 pamphlets with lessons tackling such topics as Tongue Control, Synchronization, Acting, Gestures and Expressions. There are also audio tapes, a vent "device" (a Popsicle stick with holes in it that helps you keep your jaw still) and a yellow coin purse that has a face with red lips painted on it. You get a sense that the information has been polished over time, an oral history sharpened by retelling over many generations.

Clinton Detweiler, proprietor of Maher Studios, also sells hundreds of other booklets and cassette tapes on topics such as dialect instruction, which includes lessons in Yiddish, Cockney and Upper-Class New England ("Kennedy-esque"). Pore over the Maher kit and it becomes clear that the lessons teach voice control, albeit delivered in a down-home, familiar style. Whereas voice teachers encourage students to open up their vocal chords, vents learn to tighten, clamp and compress them. You learn to talk through slightly parted teeth and to work especially hard on the sounds that require lip movement, such as P's, B's, M's and F's, or to come up with alternate sounds to approximate these mouth-bending consonants.

Calling himself out of class on the P.A.

Still, nothing beats a lesson by a real pro, which is how ventriloquial skills have been passed on traditionally. Backstage, I meet L.A.-based vent Ronn Lucas, who has his own TV show in London and regularly plays for comedy clubs, cruise ships and corporations in this country. He's of medium build, wears a neat haircut, has quick eyes and appears to be in constant motion. He gives me an impromptu lesson in the "distant voice," the illusion known as throwing one's voice. It's a handy trick; Nacho Estrada realized ventriloquism's potential in school when he successfully called himself out of the classroom on the P.A. system.

Of course, no one can literally throw one's voice; one can only give an impression that it emanates from a distant spot, mainly by changing the resonation of the voice tone. I do as Lucas says, trying to swallow my voice and push it way to the back of my throat, until it sounds tiny and tinny at the same time. My attempt sounds like the raspy voice you might produce after someone has hit you directly in the stomach, followed by the gag reflex. Rubbing my Adam's apple, I wonder how the famous vent Clifford Guest managed so realistically to imitate a fox hunt moving offstage, complete with the riders, horses and baying of the hounds–all with enough volume to reach the audience.

When you're really good, then comes the precision work: the breathing and synchronizing with the figure. Only then can you try the difficult stuff, forcing air with the diaphragm over the vocal chords at a frenzied pace, doing a speeded-up auctioneer's voice, while keeping your lips from trembling or while blowing up a balloon

On break during a cruise ship gig, Ronn Lucas and his "timeless teenager, Scorch" take tea in a hot tub.

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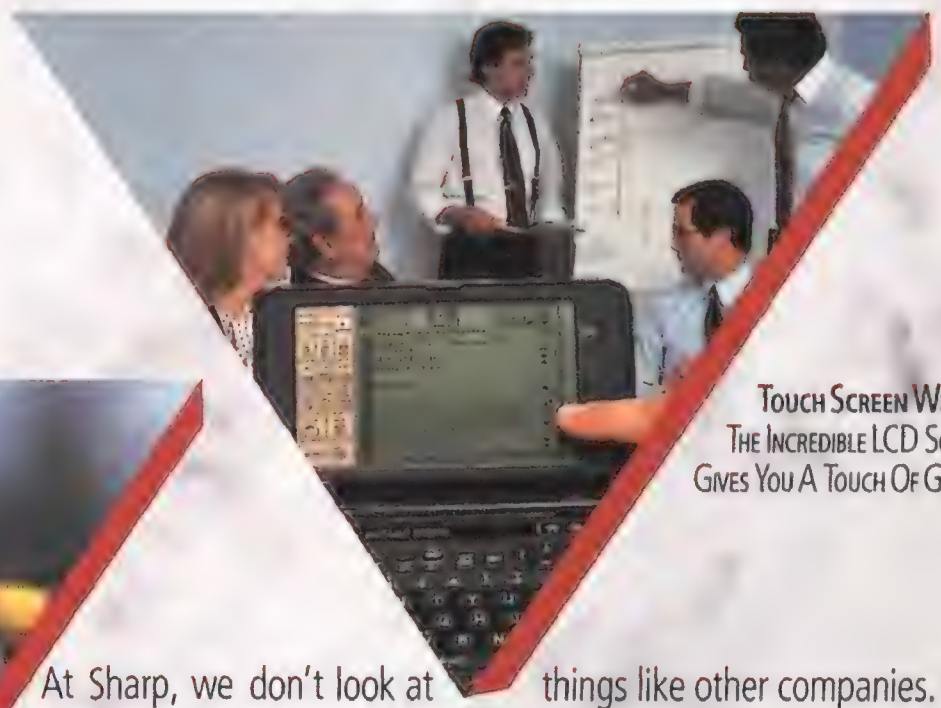

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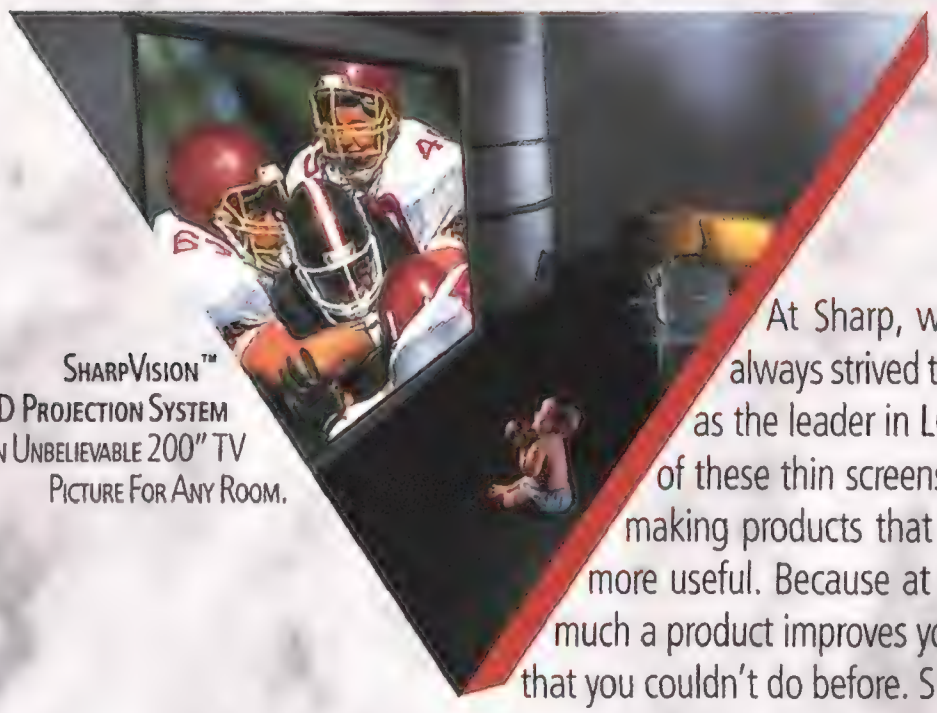

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or drinking water. All the while the vent must keep in mind, and be responsive to, the audience. Try balancing all that on your knee.

It's an act that goes back to ancient times. (And even to other species–little mountain rodents called pikas "throw" their squeaks to confuse predators.) The term "ventriloquism" comes from the Latin words *venter* and *loquor* which mean "belly" and "to speak." The earliest roots of ventriloquism are difficult to determine but are probably tied to early religious spiritism, where so-called necromancers professed to communicate with the dead, using their own bodies as the vessel. Some believe that the witch of Endor in the Old Testament used ventriloquism, while others are convinced that the Oracle at Delphi availed herself of ventriloquial skills in Grecian times. Contemporary English vent and author Valentine Vox (who adopted the name of a celebrated fictional vent) believes that the world's oldest ventriloquism joke–"Hey, stop putting words into my mouth"–was coined by the Greek playwright Aristophanes in his comedy of 422 B.C. entitled *Wasps.*

A dead fish belies a salesman's spiel

Along with the art of mimicking sounds other than voices, ventriloquism really got going in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, especially after the French Revolution, which opened up the way for music halls and entertainment for the masses. While many entertainers were successful both in Europe and America, one in particular catapulted the art to new heights.

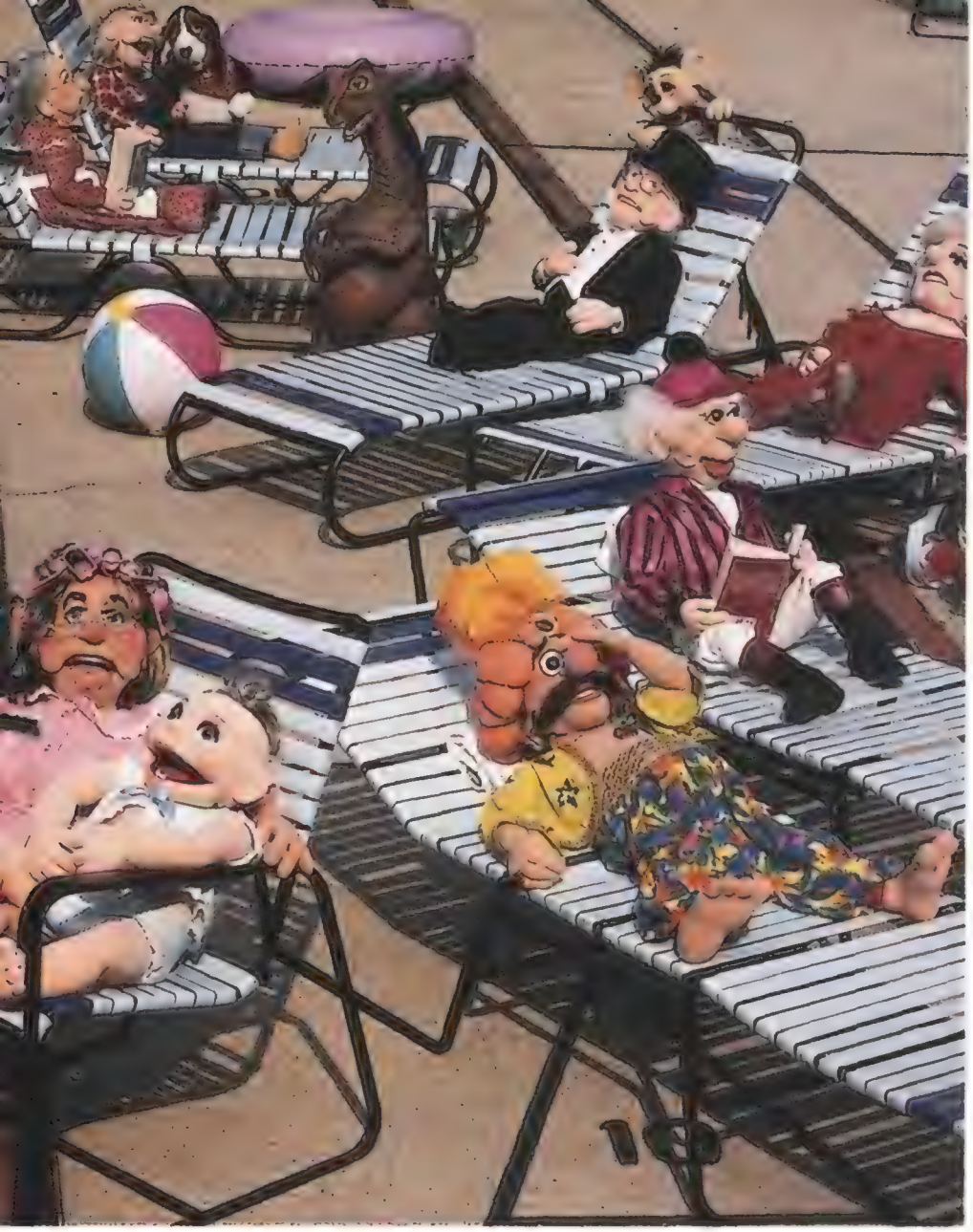
Born at the end of the 18th century, Frenchman Nicholas Marie Alexandre Vattermare performed for Napoleon Bonaparte at the age of 11. In his show at London's Adelphi Theatre in 1822, he played 13 characters in an astounding flurry of rapid costume changes and "thrown" voices. His onstage character would converse with the others, who appeared to be in a room offstage, behind a door or in a cellar, chimney or trunk. During his rapid costume changes offstage he would maintain constant chatter among multiple characters. He once landed in jail after challenging a fishmonger's claim that his product was fresh. To everyone's surprise, the dead fish in his hands retorted, "It's a damned lie–I haven't seen water in a week."

Vattermare's escapades inspired a highly successful romantic novel, Henry Cockton's *The Life and Adventures of Valentine Vox the Ventriloquist,* a frolicking tale that came out in 1840 and introduced vast audiences to the magic of throwing one's voice.

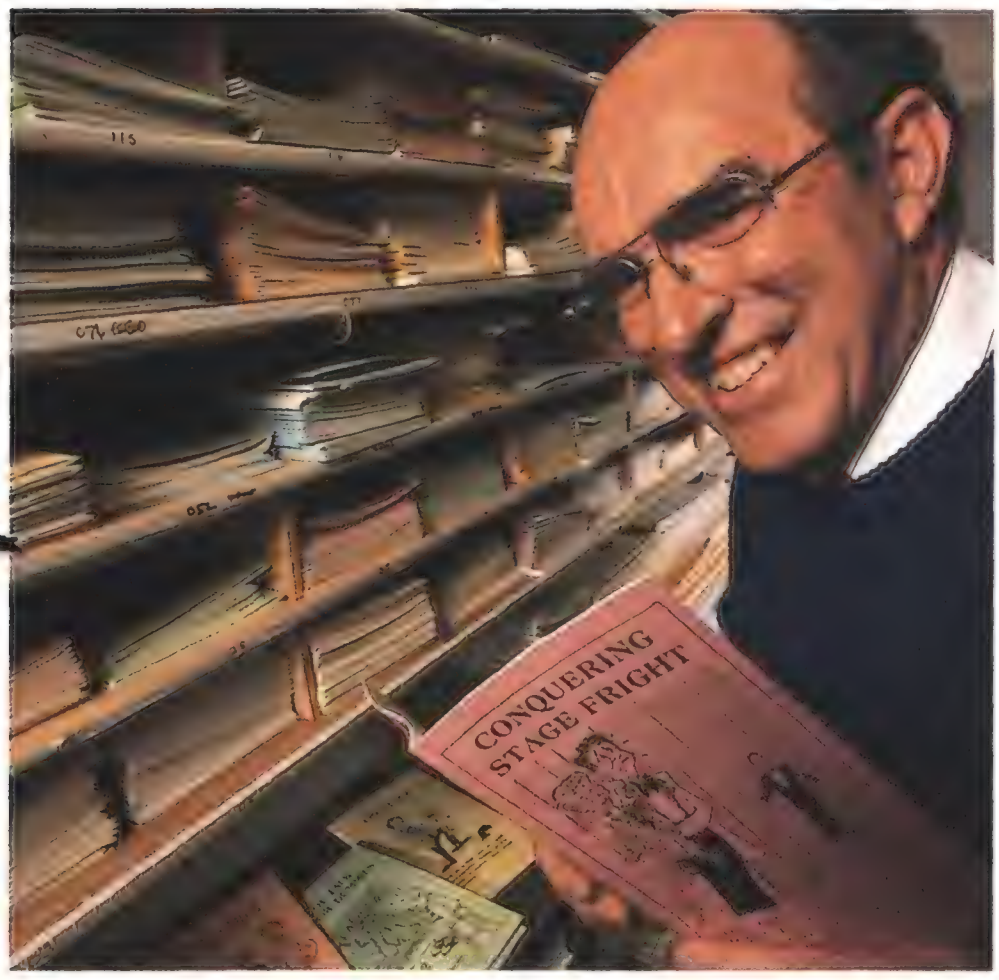
With the vaudeville period–an era reaching its height between the 1880s and 1920s–many ventriloquists started using single characters, hastening development of what we know as the modern figure, with an exaggerated mouth and a great range of movement. The best of the

Verna Finly, the grande dame of "soft figures," enjoys a picnic lunch with her creations at summer vent meet.

The puppets get top billing: seeing Shari Lewis, one fan said, "Look, Mom, the lady who works for Lamb Chop."



She says that her woman in hair curlers (at center) tops all of the others as a cantankerous smart aleck.



"Get 'em warmed up enough–they won't be watching your lips," advises mail-order king Clinton Detweiler.

wooden figures are a curious fusion of engineering feats and sculpture. Underneath the wig, the back of the head opens, revealing tangled innards of metal and wire, screws and levers. The most mechanically complex figures, including Reggie Trickpus (p. 67), were made by the McElroy brothers, who created perhaps only 100 of them in the ten years prior to World War II. They assembled some 300 different springs, pieces of metal, typewriter keys and bicycle spokes into a mechanical brain, a synergistic effort not unlike that of another pair of brothers–the Wrights. Bob Neller and Rudy Vallee were among the vents who used McElroy figures.

"N-E-S-T-L-E-S, Nestlé's makes the very best. . ."

Another pair of skilled carvers, Theodore and Charles Mack, created Charlie McCarthy, the figure that would help to make Edgar Bergen one of the greatest performance stars of this century. The original Charlie can be seen at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. Steeped in the traditions of the vaudevillian stage, Bergen almost single-handedly changed the art of ventriloquism, which had found little audience after vaudeville's demise. In 1936 he appeared on the Fleischmann Hour, a radio show starring Rudy Vallee. Performing on radio, where no one could see his technical skills, was a risk for a ventriloquist, but it paid off. His gift was the ability to bring Charlie to life–so much so that First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, upon meeting the duo, stuck her hand out to shake Charlie's first.

When television came along, Bergen-inspired vents, such as Jimmy Nelson and Paul Winchell, adapted to the new medium. One of the most recognizable television icons of the 1950s was the Nestlé's commercial, featuring Jimmy Nelson and his figures Danny O'Day and the floppy-eared dog Farfel. Trying out for the commercial in 1955, young Nelson was nervous. First, Danny O'Day sang "N-E-S-T-L-E-S, Nestlé's makes the very best. . ."; then Farfel answered, "Chawwwwclat." And–because of Nelson's sweaty hands, which caused his finger to slip–the dog's jaw snapped, a no-no in the world of ventriloquism. But the Nestlé's folks liked it, and for a decade Farfel was the country's most-quoted dog–at least among children.

After the network variety shows of the 1950s and '60s died out, ventriloquists were less visible, with notable exceptions including Jay Johnson and his figure Bob on the television show *Soap* or Willie Tyler's appearances with Lester. Top vents such as Lucas and Jeff Dunham appeared on the last remaining television network venue, the *Tonight Show with Johnny Carson*, perhaps because Carson himself started out as a vent. The best hard figures–by such carvers as Tim Sëlberg and Alan Semok–now sell for thousands of dollars each.

Nearly 500 historical vent figures will be on display at

a museum opening early next year in Las Vegas. Called the Magic and Movie Hall of Fame, it will be the second ventriloquism museum in the United States–the first is the 31-year-old Vent Haven museum in Fort Mitchell, Kentucky. Valentine Vox has designed the exhibits for the Las Vegas museum, which will include film clips of many famous live performances and a figure that a visitor can manipulate with buttons and levers. Elsewhere, following a clip from the film *Magic*, a chair spins around and the figure Fats chillingly intones, "Abracadabra!" There is also a booth with special mirrors to help teach visitors secrets of the ventriloquial art.

The mild resurgence ventriloquism enjoys today is due in large part to the genius of puppeteer Jim Henson. His Muppet creations on *Sesame Street*, beginning with Kermit the Frog (on periodic display at the Smithsonian), revolutionized the art of puppetry. The Henson touch translated as well into ventriloquism: no longer were figures the province of carved wood with intricate workings and stiff movements; they were soft and fluid, less expensive, and could become almost any creature or object.

The grande dame of "soft figure" makers is Verna Finly. Distinctive and universally admired, her figures are known simply as Verna puppets among fellow vents. A white-haired woman presenting the comfortable figure of a happy grandmother, with disarming modesty she characterizes what she does as sculpting with foam and scissors. She carries around a book of her work, Polaroids stuffed into a family picture album, with visages of King Tut, Michael Jackson, Rodin's *Thinker*, a sumo wrestler and a past-her-prime stage actress. Occasionally, Finly gives a course to would-be puppet makers, working slowly through the stages of constructing the head (carpet foam) and body (a plastic bottle). Her hands move deftly, like a chef's, over a table laden with glue, scissors, cloth and paint.

Today the top vents, such as Ronn Lucas, Jeff Dunham, Dan Horn, Brad Cummings, Peggy Miller and Shari Lewis, use soft figures. Lewis' soft figures predate the rest of the pack. In 1960 she brought a show to television with Lamb Chop, a sock converted into a lamb, and her friends Charlie Horse and Hush Puppy. Her PBS show, in its third season, has three Emmys to its credit and some 11 million viewers each week. I remember her from my childhood, and now I watch my children enjoying her fast-paced energy and saccharine humor. Don't think, however, that the show hasn't changed over three decades. "I have winds of MTV blowing through my show," says Lewis, "complete with rock, country, hip-hop and hand jive."

The television age has put pressures on vents to create more acts and update their material quickly. With few spots at the top–one estimate is that only about 100 vents make their living completely from performances–they are extremely competitive and sensitive about their material, and there are times when the informal code of professional ethics breaks down.

At the convention, in the all-night coffeeshop, two of the top American vents exchange heated words at a table of embarrassed onlookers. It seems that one believes he originated a piece on emotions that entails asking someone in the audience for an emotion, then performing it. Such a simple yet ingenious routine is in the acts of both vents. No one knows who came up with the idea first or to whom it belongs. The conflict lies unresolved, hanging in the air like a bad odor.

When it comes down to it, the best material is not the straight jokes but the situations a vent can create–ones in which the punch line is not necessary. Take Ronn Lucas' signature act. It involves a sock, which he strips off his foot and draws over his hand. Bent at the wrist, the lime green sock suddenly becomes a creature, alive and talkative. It's as believable as any figure that costs thousands of dollars.

After I return home from the convention and play with the home vent course, I find myself with my 3-year-old daughter, Grace, one night in the front yard, watching the moon. I casually pull off a sock and put it on my hand. There in the moonlight, my sock character, Grace and I talk about going to preschool, a big concern of hers. Her attention is rapt; the conversation among the three of us is real.

And though my mouth moves quite a lot, I have learned the most important lesson in ventriloquism: that the secret is to create the illusion of reality, possible with a puppet, a sock–or just about anything.

When he gets really excited, all 14 movable parts of the McElroy brothers' Reggie Trickpus take off wiggling.

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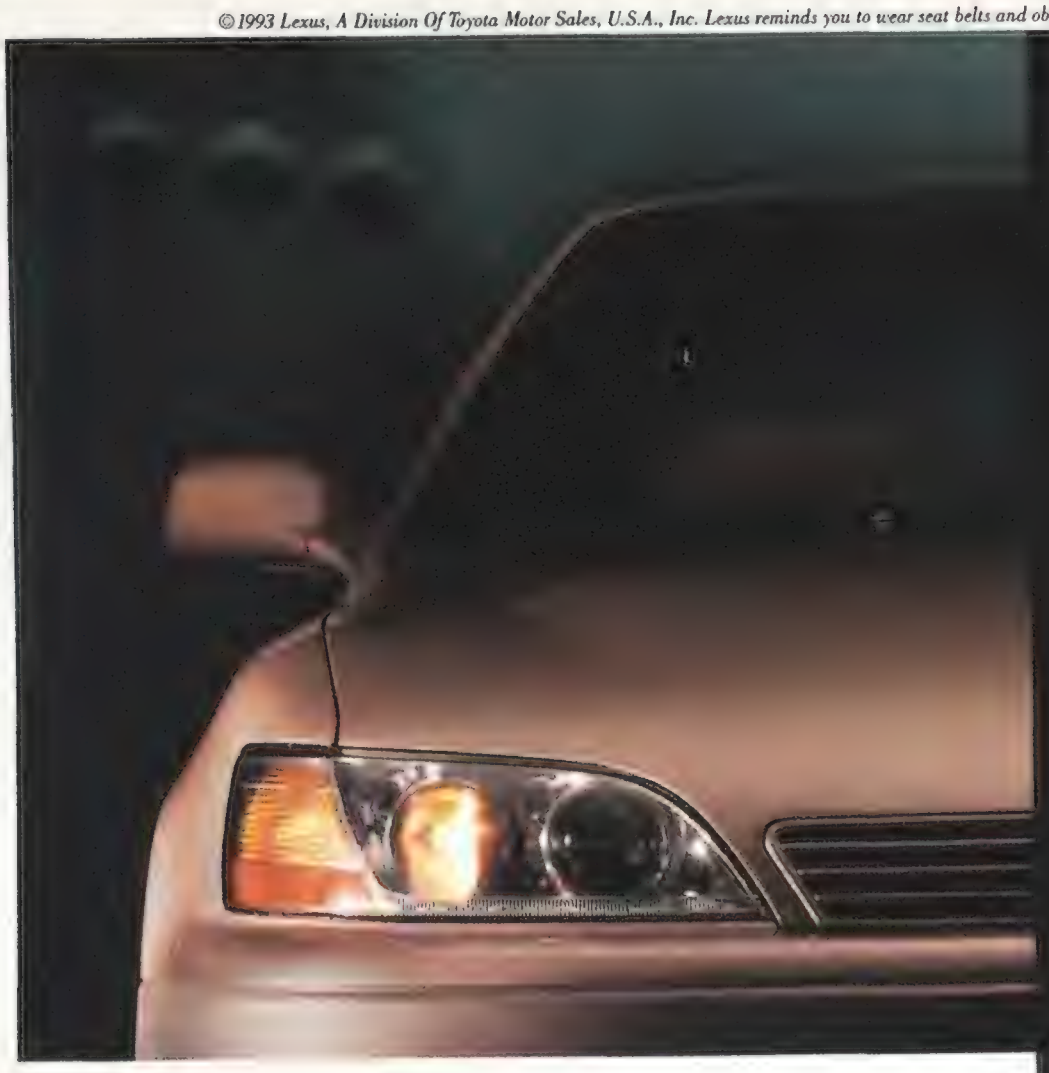

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Birgit Akerbergs Hansen

By Susan McCarthy

A seabird's secret life is revealed–50 miles inland

Its nest site eluded searchers for decades, then one turned up in old-growth woods; will the marbled murrelet be the next spotted owl?

Hoyt Foster was 150 feet up in a Douglas fir when he saw the strange creature crouching in a depression on a moss-covered branch. "It looked like a squashed-up porcupine with a beak sticking out." It was a baby bird. Foster, a tree trimmer, had climbed many trees and seen many birds in them, but never one like this. It had webbed feet.

The tree he was trimming stood five miles from the ocean in Big Basin Redwoods State Park near Santa Cruz, California, where some of the trees are 1,500 years old. He had been hired to cut storm-weakened branches so they wouldn't fall on campers. It was August 7, 1974, and although Foster didn't know it, he had just solved an ornithological mystery.

Foster thought the chick so unusual that he captured it. He turned it over to park rangers, one of whom, Steve Singer, thought it resembled another web-footed bird a camper had found injured on the forest floor the previous year. Foster's chick died after a few days, but biologists confirmed Singer's hunch and asked Foster to return to his tree and retrieve the branch with its mossy depression–it was the first known nest of the marbled murrelet.

Today, two decades after Foster's discovery, this obscure little seabird threatens to cause as much grief for the timber industry in the Pacific Northwest as has the spotted owl.

Marbled murrelets are plump birds the size of robins; one biologist says they look like potatoes with beaks. They cruise the coastal Pacific, diving for zooplankton and small fish. Their heads are cocked at a vigilant angle as they bob in the waves; their short and pointed wings are used to swim underwater as well as fly.

Russian explorers discovered the murrelet–but not its nest–in 1789. By the 19th century ornithologists had become fascinated by the birds. "They may be seen leaving the water in pairs, and starting upwards uttering their wild weird cries," wrote naturalist Joseph Grinnell in 1897. Grinnell and others shot murrelets, measured and dissected them but could not find the nests.

Seeking answers, the early naturalists asked Native Americans where the birds nested. In holes in trees, some said; in burrows above timberline or at the roots of trees, said others. Most agreed that murrelets nested in the forest. Since seabirds customarily nest in crowded, squawking colonies on ocean cliffs and islands, the naturalists found the Indians' answers implausible.

But it was true that at dawn and dusk murrelets could be heard overhead in coastal forests. Often the fog hid them (early loggers called them "fog larks"), but occasionally they could be glimpsed. In late summer they were seen flying inland carrying fish, and those "wild weird cries" were heard up to 50 miles from shore.

The last nest mystery in North America

In 1956 biologist C. J. Guiguet wrote "of hours spent by night on shores, listening for the cry of the marbled murrelet; of a series of camps where they had been seen flying in; of searches in the talus slopes and rock slides of the alplands; and of hand and knee crawling with digging irons through Pacific West Coast salal [a shrub] jungle." The nest of every other North American breeding bird was known, and the idea of finding the unknown one tantalized generations of ornithologists. Rewards were offered, but no one claimed them.

Occasionally, a chick would be found on the forest floor–perhaps the birds did nest in the forest. Some scientists guessed they nested in holes in trees, like wood ducks. When the babies fledged they might jump down, waddle to a stream and swim to the sea.

After Hoyt Foster found that first nest in 1974, it was more than a decade before a second was discovered, in Alaska. Along with two found by Russian scientists in Siberia, that made a total of four worldwide. In 1986 the Pacific Seabird Group (PSG) held a workshop on marbled murrelets; people were growing concerned that the bird's evasiveness might seal its doom or, conversely, that it might become a threat to the livelihood of many citizens of the Pacific Northwest. The reason in both in-

Unlike most birds, marbled murrelets are conspicuous in winter (top), mottled drab in spring when they nest.

Photographs by Gary Braasch

Oregon's Valley of the Giants is a popular nest site; birds have to fly over a clear-cut valley to get there.

A fight over whether old-growth forest is the only place the murrelets will nest has already broken out.

stances was the murrelet's apparent choice of breeding habitat in the lower 48 states: old-growth forest.

Although there were no historical data to determine whether murrelet populations were declining, two things were clear. Along coasts where there were old-growth forests, there were murrelets. When the forests had been logged, there were essentially no murrelets.

In California, for example, U.S. Forest Service biologists C. J. Ralph and Peter Paton compared surveys of murrelets with data compiled from aerial photographs. The correlation was clear. There were murrelets in the waters off Del Norte and Humboldt counties, where substantial old growth remained. South, off Mendocino, where forests were logged long ago, murrelets were rare or nonexistent. Farther south, they were present off Santa Cruz County, where significant old growth had been preserved in parks. The evidence was strong but circumstantial. "Based on similar knowledge," Paton said, "I wear seat belts, don't smoke, don't ride motorcycles and don't own a chain saw."

Environmentalists were already locked in battle with industry over the spotted owl. A case for protecting murrelets would be harder to make. Two nests did not constitute an overwhelming body of evidence. Clearly more research was necessary.

In 1988, when the National Audubon Society petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list the murrelet as a threatened species, biologists went to work. They counted birds at sea, they searched for nests and combed breeding areas with "dawn surveys."

Because the fog larks appeared to fly inland only under the cover of darkness or fog, these censuses, based on hearing the birds' calls, became a standard protocol for researchers. Dawn surveys start well before dawn. One fall morning Nancy Naslund, working for her master's degree in marine science at the University of California, rises in darkness to drive into the coastal mountains. Her car struggles on the grades. The dashboard sports a grove of feathers, none from murrelets–it's not easy to find murrelet feathers. We reach the sur-

Susan McCarthy is coauthoring a book, When Elephants Weep: The question of animal emotions, *with Jeffrey Moussaleff Masson for Jonathan Cape in Great Britain.*

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Deborah Whitaker speaks into tape recorder as she watches early morning "fog larks" in California park.

In Valley of Giants, Toni De Santo measures Douglas fir under which some murrelet eggshells were found.

vey site, still in blackness. Nancy carries binoculars, flashlight and tape recorder. Since one can get disturbingly cold standing in the woods, she is dressed in layers of warm clothing. She whispers into the recorder–date, temperature, wind direction. We gaze at the black sky. Fog hides the stars.

Overhead, a murrelet cries, *Keer!* Nothing can be seen. "A hundred and sixty degrees–ten meters, single *keer,*" Nancy whispers, indicating the direction and distance from which the cry was heard. *Keer! Keer! Keer!* As dawn approaches, the surrounding redwoods and Douglas firs appear. Against the gray sky a black filigree of branches can be seen. The sky is moving–fog banks passing over. *Keer! Keer!*

Color begins to emerge. Foliage turns from black to green; a delicate blue appears at the fringes of the sky; the fog glows white. The dawn chorus of other birds begins. "First robin, 4:48." The jays and woodpeckers are raucous. They make listening for the fading cries of the murrelets like listening for distant music while someone next to you is talking loudly.

A chance to see a seabird in the woods

"Two-note calls at 265 degrees, 15 meters," Nancy whispers. Nearly two hours have passed, and her head is still tilted toward the treetops. Towhees are high-tailing across the clearing. Nearby, a pileated woodpecker is savaging a tree trunk. But now that it is light, there's the chance of seeing as well as hearing murrelets.

Suddenly, two small birds arrow in front of the fog. "Look!" Nancy exclaims.

"The Murrelets fly faster than any bird I ever saw," marveled Joseph Grinnell in 1897. "I should estimate it at not less than one hundred miles an hour, and it is probably much more." (Radar gives the bird a top speed of 65 mph, still extraordinarily fast.)

As the light increases, the cries of the murrelets stop. Nancy sighs happily.

Steve Singer, the former ranger who'd been involved in Hoyt Foster's discovery in 1974, couldn't forget murrelets. He and his wife, Stephanie, had become fanatics. They, too, spent many cold mornings on dawn surveys, but they longed to find a nest. Steve's idea was to pick out a likely tree and watch it with the intensity of a mousing cat. One morning in 1989 he was staring at a promising Douglas fir when a murrelet silently flew out. Was it silent because it had a nest?

The next dawn Steve and Stephanie Singer and Nancy Naslund staked out the tree from three points. At 5:20 they saw a bird dart out. "All three of us felt fairly sure that there was a nest in that tree, but–you're not sure until you're sure," Stephanie told me. Over the years, people had felt sure there were nests in many trees, then climbed up and never found a thing.

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Later that week Nancy saw which branch the murrelet flew from. On a day when Nancy was away doing a survey, Steve and Gary Strachan, superintendent of a nearby park, climbed a hill to look down on the tree while Stephanie trailed behind. It was hard to keep track of the possible nest branch. Steve pointed out a branch, and he and Stephanie argued about whether it was the right one. She remembers every detail: "I was actually kneeling down in the duff looking into the spotting scope, and they'd gone on to look for something else. I'm just staring there at the branch. Lo and behold, I see this bird sitting on the branch."

Stephanie Singer paused. She is a reserved person, slender, with short dark hair. "I called Steve and Gary, and they agreed that I wasn't hallucinating."

"You didn't yell when you saw the nest?" I asked.

"Oh, yes. You could have heard me in Santa Cruz."

It was June 10, 1989. They had found the tree nest of a marbled murrelet, with an adult murrelet on it. It was a first. Within 24 hours biologists began arriving from all over the country to see for themselves. A search that had lasted for more than a hundred years was finally over.

Team members watched the nest and recorded data every hour of the day. Each morning before dawn, a murrelet would fly silently in and land on the branch. Often it would bow to the murrelet on the egg, who would get up. The arriving bird would then sit on the egg, while the other disappeared into the darkness. The bird on the egg would sit for 24 hours. It would blink and occasionally turn its head. Every hour or two it would turn the egg (to keep the embryo from developing unevenly). The birds' dark plumage made them difficult to see in the dim forest.

The watchers had time to observe other things, such as a raven that flew by, going to its own nest. On June 24 the raven flew to the murrelet nest and shoved the sitting murrelet off. The egg was destroyed. Nancy sighed, "You can hate what happens, but it's natural. You just can't argue with it."

Astonishingly, a few days later Nancy and a volunteer found another nest, doubling the number of known tree nests in North America. A new vigil began. They set up a night-vision telescope at a distance, so as not to attract the notice of predators.

In July the sitting murrelets began to look uncomfortable, shifting from side to side. A fuzzy chick was visible peering out from under one of the parents. The adults started leaving the chick to fly to the ocean and bring back fish. The chick, less stealthy than its parents, sat plucking idly at lichen or trying to catch flies. Two days after the watchers found the chick, a Steller's jay killed it and carried it off.

The nests had been found in trees that were between 300 and 600 years old, bolstering the evidence that murrelets depend on old-growth forest. "The marbled murrelet is the next spotted owl," said Gary Strachan. "It makes the spotted owl look like a habitat slut," the Forest Service's C. J. Ralph said.

Others remained unconvinced. "I don't think that it's

Bob Peck investigates murrelet nest on moss-covered branch 180 feet up (above); he checks second nest in the same tree (right), a most unusual find. Eggshell fragments, down feathers, will go into his plastic bag.

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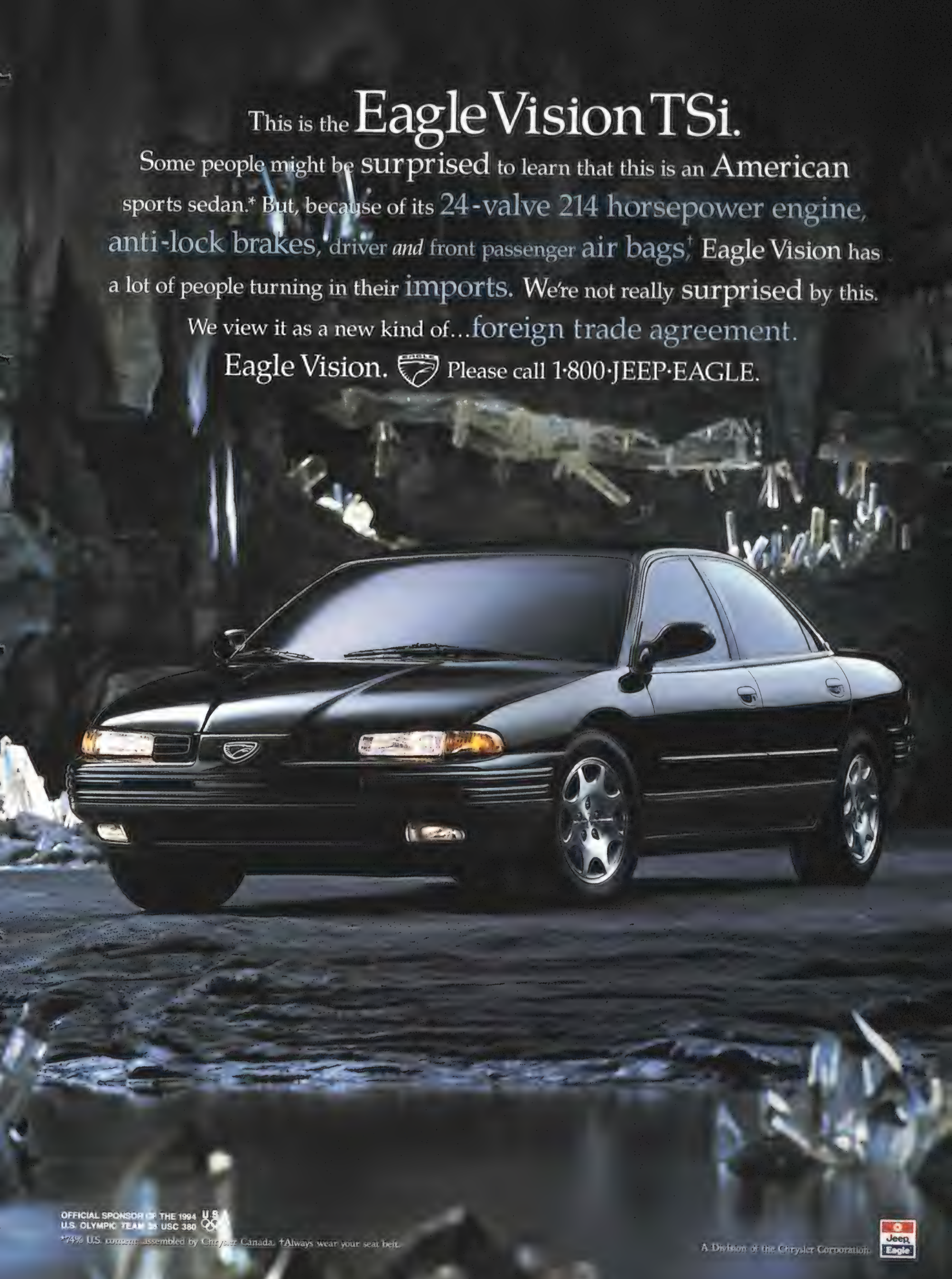

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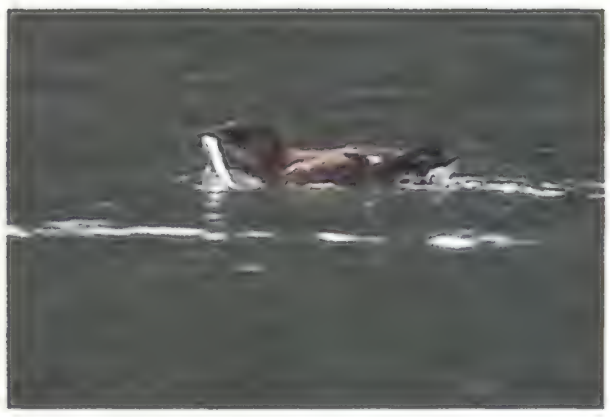

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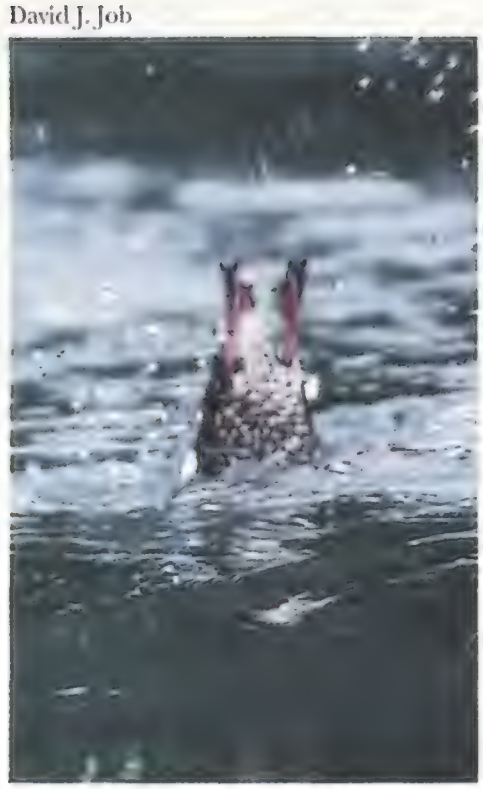

Murrelets in elegant breeding plumage swim in Auke Cove (top left). They fly surprisingly fast (far left), and catch fish underwater (left). Diving bird (above) is called a dipchick.

reasonable to assume that those birds could live only in very large areas of old-growth timber that's never been logged," said Bob Stephens, then timber manager for the Pacific Lumber Company (PALCO).

The fact that the Naslund-Singer-Strachan team had found not one but two nests inspired researchers throughout the Northwest. Each season since then, more tree nests have been found. This spring the North American grand total was 60.

In 1990 a team in Oregon led by Kim Nelson found two nests, 12 and 16 miles inland. One chick was later blown out of its tree, and the other disappeared, probably eaten by a great horned owl. "It's rough being a murrelet," Nelson sighed.

At a nest in Washington State, a tree climber measured a chick and epoxied a lightweight transmitter to its feathers. An automated camera was set up to monitor its activity. For more than a century people had wondered how a murrelet chick gets to the sea. In this case, it turned out, the chick was starved out of the nest. The parents, which had been bringing fish for weeks, simply stopped coming. "No Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval for them," said Tom Hamer, a consulting biologist. After 36 hours without fish, the chick began pacing, flapping its wings. Just before dusk it sprang up and flew like a bullet, due west. The next day the transmitter signal was picked up at sea, 23 miles away.

Hamer marvels, "They're starving. Then they have to fly a long distance–and they've never flown before; land on the water–and they've never seen water before; and then they've got to catch fish–and they've never caught fish before. Talk about instinct!"

Nancy Naslund moved to Alaska in 1991 to survey murrelet activity in different habitats. Her coworkers needed little urging to look for nests too, and they found six in the Prince William Sound area. The next year ten more were found in Alaska.

Steven Kerns, a biologist employed by PALCO, found two nests on company land. Kern's goal is to identify which stands murrelets use and then formulate "a silvicultural prescription that will allow us to maintain habitat while extracting wood product."

One unanswered question is whether murrelets can breed successfully in stands too small for spotted owls, which catch their food in the forest. Some preservationists fear that if murrelets are thought to use small stands successfully, that will lend justification to cut old growth, leaving remnants for the murrelets. Others hope that murrelets will give reason to protect more trees by saving stands too small for owls. "Land managers always ask me that: 'Can they nest in a single tree in the middle of a clear-cut?'" says Kim Nelson.

In September 1992, after much delay, the USFWS declared the murrelet a threatened species in California, Oregon and Washington. Logging projects in each of those states have been delayed or stopped because of

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Egg of this possibly threatened species is the same size as that of *Gallus gallus*, the supermarket chicken.

the presence of murrelets. The fat little bird with the secret life has become a political football.

The best estimates of murrelet populations in these states are alarmingly low: 2,000 to 5,000 birds in California and Oregon, and 5,000 in Washington. "The population is a lot closer to the edge than it is in Alaska. There's a lot less habitat," biologist Bill Ritchie said. He's with Washington's Department of Wildlife. "They're so close to extinction in these states that even the loss of individuals is important." Recently biologists have suggested that the bird is even more imperiled than they had thought, and it might be necessary to list it as endangered.

In Humboldt County, California–where 9 percent of the jobs are in the timber industry (SMITHSONIAN, October 1993)–PALCO has been unable to cut the Headwaters Forest because murrelets are believed to breed there, though no nests have been found. "One of California's three murrelet populations nests on PALCO lands," asserts U.S. Representative Dan Hamburg, whose district includes the area. Company spokesmen have expressed outrage. "You presume that there are murrelets present because you've got big trees, and you presume that they're going to be hurt. What's the standing of that?" argued a PALCO attorney at one hearing.

Murrelets have not yet caused clashes in Alaska–a state that has no spotted owls–but the day can't be far off. Based on surveys at sea in the 1970s and '80s, USFWS seabird biologist John Piatt estimates there are 200,000 marbled murrelets in Alaska. Yet there are indications that the species may be declining. It is classified as Category 2, which means the state recognizes it as a candidate for listing and is gathering data.

"It's so political it's enough to make you sick," says Piatt. "We prefer not to make those hard decisions. We prefer to study it to death."

The large stands of old forest in Alaska are subject to the same pressures as forests elsewhere. One Alaskan biologist says, "Whatever problems happened in Washington and Oregon and California are likely to happen here. It just hasn't happened yet."

Suzann Speckman is a seabird biologist who's trying to get some answers. She censuses murrelets in Auke Bay, near Juneau, and in nearby forests. She wants to correlate their numbers with tide and prey movements, and most of all to get an accurate estimate of the population. Then future censuses will show if that population is in fact declining.

Auke Bay is a murrelet stronghold. As Speckman counts them on a mild day this spring, steering the boat with one hand and holding a tape recorder in the other, we are surrounded by hundreds of murrelets in breeding plumage. Contemplating the fact that California's murrelets are estimated to number 2,000, Speckman shakes her head. "I've got almost that many in just this 5-mile-by-3-mile spot of water."

Most of the murrelets are in pairs. They glance at each other constantly. If one dives, the other dives; if one flies, the other flies.

As the boat approaches, one pair dives and becomes separated. When they pop to the surface, they are 20 yards apart. They look around wildly and utter frantic calls. They swim rapidly toward each other. As they get closer, their calls become quieter. When they meet, they mark their reunion with a bill-up display. Inches apart, they swim side by side with bills pointed up in the air, exhibiting their marbled throats and chests. They zigzag back and forth, then lower their bills and swim away together once more.

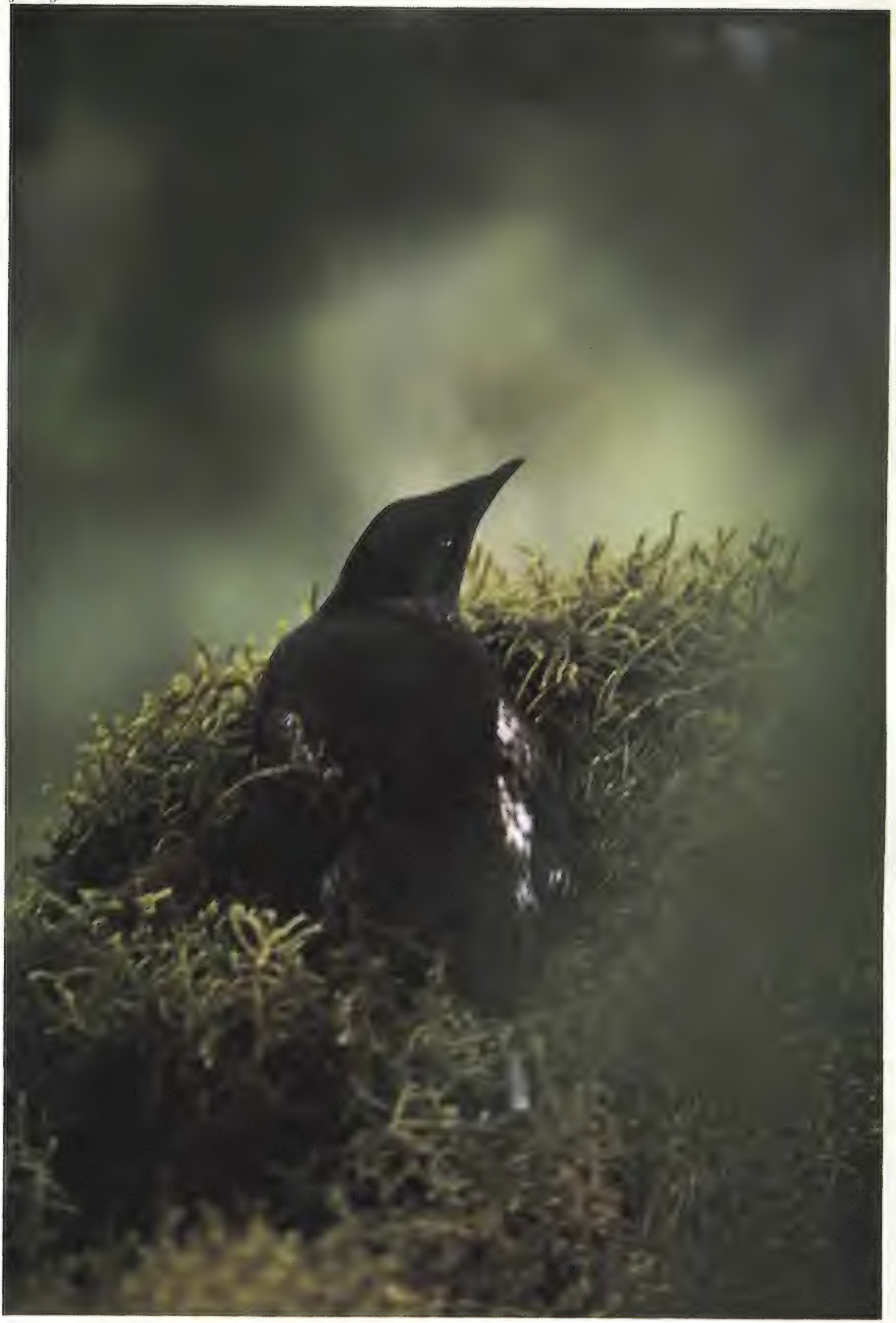
Being in pairs seems very important to murrelets. It's curious to reflect that soon they will begin the long weeks of brooding the egg, when they will see each other for only a few minutes each dawn, when one partner relieves the other.

When the chicks fledge, do the adults get together in the same pairs? That's one aspect of murrelet life that's still a secret. Similar seabirds stay together, so perhaps murrelets do too. But no good way of marking murrelets has yet been found. Speckman gazes at them with scientific longing. "What I want to do is dye their little butt feathers," she says. "That's the part you see because they're always swimming away from you."

Near the end of the survey, two murrelets nearby notice the boat and panic. They dive so suddenly that water spurts two feet into the air. Speckman bursts out laughing. "What goofy little birds!"

It's now possible to see a murrelet on its moss nest–an ornithological holy grail for more than a century.

Jeff Hughes



By Sue Hubbell

'Hopping John' gets the year off to a flying start

Many people believe a plate of black-eyed peas and rice on New Year's Day brings luck, but the origins of this old custom are mysterious

When I was growing up in Michigan my family never ate "hopping John"–black-eyed peas and rice–on New Year's Day for good luck. I don't know why. Perhaps we were too far from the South, where, some say, the tradition started. Or perhaps we were too dour a family to believe in good luck. It wasn't until I moved to the Ozarks, years later, that I heard of the custom. Here, one New Year's Day, the banker's wife telephoned me and asked me to dinner. She is a splendid cook and I accepted happily. I was astonished to be served a plateful of black-eyed peas and rice, plainer food than I'd ever eaten at her table. She noticed and laughed. "You don't know about hoppin' Johnny?" she asked. "Eating it on New Year's Day is supposed to bring you good luck in the coming year."

My hostess is a retired schoolteacher and she seemed embarrassed to give credit to what sounded like a hillbilly superstition. "Some say that you'll have as much money as the peas you eat. Some cook up the rice with a piece of money in it, and the person who gets the money in his or her serving will be rich. That's all nonsense, of course, but it's fun to keep custom. People here have been doing it for generations."

On New Year's Days since, I have eaten hopping John with greens in Arizona, hopping John with ham in New York City, and hopping John with both in the Ozarks. I've fixed it myself in various ways and various places in between. And extremely fine years I've had afterward, thank you very much.

African-Americans claim the tradition is their own, a centerpiece of soul cookery. They point to the fact that it was their slave ancestors who introduced the cultivation of both black-eyed peas and rice to this continent. They cite the many ways cooks use the black-eyed pea in Africa (one book lists 60-some recipes), where cowpeas, the more usual name of *Vigna unguiculata,* were native. Black-eyed peas are, in fact, not true peas (genus *Pisum*) at all, but a type of bean (genus *Vigna*). Some French Canadians insist the tradition belongs to them; a similar one exists in French-speaking Louisiana.

To be sure, there is a long Latin association of the New Year with beans and good luck in France and elsewhere in Europe dating back to the Romans. Japanese-Americans in California say their forebears brought the custom of eating black-eyed peas on New Year's Day with them to this country. Another Japanese tradition, dating back to the 1300s, calls for the head of the house to go through all the rooms at midnight on the last day of the year carrying a box of roasted beans that he scatters, chanting "*Oni wa soto, fuka wa uchi*" ("Out with demons! In with good luck!").

"Oh sure," said Stephanie Hall, an archivist with the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, when I asked her about hopping John. "I know about it. Nobody seems to have studied it much. But I remember eating it when I visited my aunt in North Carolina at New Year's. We had black-eyed peas with collard greens, not rice like I understand some people do, because both represented money. The peas are sort of copper-colored. They are the change. The collard greens are folding money. Pork, in sundry different forms, is usually added to it."

Sauerkraut and pork, cabbage and herring

"You're supposed to eat pork on New Year's Day," Hall continued with a laugh, "because a hog roots forward, unlike a chicken, for instance, which scratches backward. There are a lot of New Year's Day eating customs like that. The Pennsylvania Dutch, for instance, eat sauerkraut and pork on New Year's Day. In other German households, cabbage and herring are consumed."

English, Irish and Scots were some of the early white settlers in the Carolinas, states which claim hopping John as their regional food, and they would have brought with them a variety of folk beliefs rooted in pre-Christian times. In Ireland, the Celtic new year (traditionally November 1) was a time of omens and auguries, a day when good fortune was sought for the coming year. Fairies and hobgoblins roamed free and the souls

Fires marked New Year's festivals in many parts of the world. People danced around them and "hopped" across.

Illustrations by Emma Shaw Smith

Cooking up a steaming pot of black-eyed peas and rice for New Year's is traditional in French-speaking Louisiana and other parts of the South.

of the dead revisited their old homes. Fires were kindled, as they were to mark New Year's and other festivals in many parts of the world. Bits of charred wood from these fires were pulled out and cherished for their potency in working cures and bringing good fortune throughout the year. People danced around the fires and, as they burned down, leaped or hopped across them, perhaps to let the smoke drive out that which was bad or unfortunate in their lives.

The 1959 Theodor Gaster edition of *The Golden Bough*, Sir James George Frazer's classic work on comparative religion and mythology, points out that part of the Muslim New Year's celebration well into the 20th century was for children and unmarried men to leap or hop over fires crying, "We shake out upon thee, O bonfire, fleas and lice and sickness of heart and bones." And, according to the *Dictionary of Mythology, Folklore and Symbols*, "hoppings" is a north English word for wakes, derived from the Anglo-Saxon *hoppan*, a religious dance or leap.

After the present calendar was adopted, it continued to be important in England and Scotland to have a piece of charred wood or coal in the house on New Year's Day, and it was considered to be good luck to have a man with dark hair or dark eyes be the first to enter the house, particularly if he carried a bit of charcoal, a piece of charred wood or even a coal shovel.

Old calendars needed catch-up days to bring them into synchrony with the seasons. Many cultures considered those days, which were inserted at the end of one year and the beginning of the next, to be days outside of time when the usual strictures need not apply, a time of festival–and misrule. Presumably because it was so much fun, this custom continued even after the calendar was reformed.

In Northern Europe and England, beans were associated with this demotic, rowdy, peoples' time at the year's end and beginning. Black-eyed peas, native to warmer climates, might not have been known in those days in Northern Europe, but other beans were. In January families selected a King of Bean and often a Queen, the commoners' "nobilities of misrule," who were chosen by receiving that portion of a cake with a bean baked into it. *The Golden Bough* describes how the fellows of Merton College, Oxford, annually elected a Rex Fabarum (King of Bean) as Lord of Misrule, who held office until Candlemas (February 2) to preside over revels, plays and games for the students. I asked an old Mertonian about it and he said that to this day the custom is remembered, if not practiced.

Beans have always been a folk food, common, cheap and nutritious. In ancient Greece and Rome, spitting beans was used as a charm to ward off witches and ghosts. According to Pliny the Elder in his *Historia Naturalis*, beans were thought to contain the souls of the dead. Because of these associations, beans were shunned by the rich and powerful and considered taboo by the priests of Rome and Egypt. We come here

Author-beekeeper Sue Hubbell has recently written on tabloids and killer bees in these pages. Her latest book is Broadsides from the Other Orders.

to a point where classical history meets music-hall comedy and requires delicacy to explain in a family magazine. Let me turn the matter over to Robert Graves, the 20th-century poet and classicist, who wrote in his volume on poetic myth, *The White Goddess*: "The Platonists excused their abstention from beans on the rationalistic ground that they caused flatulence; but this came to much the same thing [as the taboo against eating beans on the grounds that one was eating soul]. Life was breath, and to break wind after eating beans was a proof that one had eaten a living soul–in Greek and Latin the same words, *anima* and *pneuma*, stand equally for gust of wind, breath and soul or spirit."

Traditions in various cultures call for eating foods on New Year's Day that begin small and swell as they cook. In parts of Northern Europe, for instance, groates, fragments of hulled grain, were cooked to fluffiness and became a part of New Year's fare. How interesting, how fortuitous, how magical it must have seemed to the white Carolinian cooks to discover the black-eyed pea that their slaves knew. Here was a bean that came in many shades, ranging from copper-colored to red, but always with its own pair of black eyes, to fit in with their belief that a dark man with black eyes should be the first through the door on the year's first day.

By early in the 18th century, black people, sometimes coming from Africa via the Caribbean, constituted the majority of the population in the Carolinas. With them came, among other things, their food. The African kings who had sold them into slavery also profited from selling food, including beans, for the voyage and as items of trade thereafter. Among the beans were black-eyed peas. In Africa they have many names, depending upon the language spoken. They are known variously as *kondi* (echoed, perhaps, in Louisiana Creole as "congri"), *agwa, soso, isanje, wake, yo* or *adua*, to give only a few examples, but they are not called anything like "hopping John." In Ghana, cooked with rice, they are called *Yoo-ke-Omo*. By the 1770s, at least, their cultivation was well established in America, for Thomas Jefferson lists them in his 1774 *Garden Book*, noting that on August 3, "Black-eyed peas come to table."

Beans and rice nourish body and soul

Black-eyed peas and other beans are good, healthful food. Combining them with rice makes them even better, a matter discovered by cooks the world over, whether they know the science behind the fact or not. The protein value of foods is related to the pattern of essential amino acids in them. Rice and beans, separately, both lack certain different amino acids. When combined, they complement and supplement each other, providing a very high-quality protein. Beans and rice keep body and soul together.

William H. Wiggins is the author of *O Freedom!: Afro-American Emancipation Celebrations* and a professor of Afro-American Studies and Folklore at Indiana University, Bloomington. "I am not aware," he told me, "of any association of good luck with black-eyed peas in African cultures, but it was the slaves who brought to the Carolinas the ingredients of hopping John and also brought with them the knowledge of their cultivation. Many of the farms were small–they were sort of mom-and-pop affairs–and everyone on them, slave and slaveholder alike, lived together, went to church together, ate together. And I think that the custom of eating hopping John at New Year's to bring luck and fortune is a good example of cultural sharing. The Africans brought the food and the Europeans brought the lore. Together

A centuries-old Japanese New Year's ritual called for the head of the family to scatter beans about the house.

At one time in Northern Europe and England, a King (and often a Queen) of Bean was chosen to preside over the period of misrule and festival at the end of the year.

they made a blended cultural tradition. Culture is conservative; it is the last thing to change. But it does change when people live together."

Where did that wonderful, slangy name "hopping John" come from? In passing, it should be noted that red beans and rice are sometimes called "limping Susan" (although some South Carolinians would substitute okra and bacon for the beans). Several explanations have been suggested. One has it that children were required to hop around the table before eating black-eyed peas and rice. That sounds odd unless we can believe that some residue of the old European fire-hoppings made its way down the centuries. A local Ozark story says that once a hungry guest named John was graciously invited to "hop in, John" and help himself to the family fare. But the term "hopping John" had been around long before there were tellers of Ozark tales. Another etymological explanation is that the name is a corruption of the French *pois à pigeon* (pigeon pea), or the "no-eye pea" of Africa, common in the French-speaking Caribbean. There is, to be sure, a bit of a "hoppy John" sound in the pronunciation of "*à pigeon*" (AH PEA-ZHON).

The first recipe that I could find for a dish identified as hopping John is dated 1847. It is in a book titled *The Carolina Housewife*, written by Sarah Rutledge, hiding behind an authorial "Lady of Charleston."

HOPPING JOHN

> One pound of bacon, one pint of red peas, one pint of rice. First put on the peas, and when half boiled, add the bacon. When the peas are well boiled, throw in the rice, which must be first washed and gravelled. When the rice has been boiling half an hour, take the pot off the fire and put it on coals to steam, as in boiling rice alone. Put a quart of water on the peas at first, and if it boils away too much, add a little more hot water. Season with salt and pepper, and, if liked, a sprig of green mint. In serving up, put the rice and peas first in the dish, and the bacon on the top.

In 1856, Frederick Law Olmsted, the renowned American landscape architect, published a book titled *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States*, and in it he reported a conversation with a South Carolinian who criticized the character of certain young people in his adopted state. Sounding as curmudgeonly as the older generation often does in its observations of the young, the man lamented "the descendants of the former proprietors of nearly all the land of the region [along the banks of the Congaree River]. . . have been brought up in listless, aimless, and idle independence. . . . Their chief sustenance is a porridge of cow-peas, and the greatest luxury with which they are acquainted is a stew of bacon and

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peas, with red pepper, which they call 'Hopping John.'"

If hopping John was, in 1856, the name of something eaten by young louts, well, its disreputable commonness had been noted earlier, albeit not quite as the same meal. In Caroline Gilman's 1838 *Recollections of a Southern Matron*, the author refers to a dish called "hopping John" made of bacon and rice, noting that it was "a good dish, to be sure, but no more presentable to strangers in the South than baked beans and pork in New-England."

And in a puckish twist, suitable as a prank upon etymologists played by a Lord of Misrule, a King of Bean, the first printed reference to hopping John appears to be from a book published in England in 1830. In *Three Courses and a Dessert*, writer George Cruikshank mentions a beverage that sounds suspiciously like wassail, the traditional drink associated particularly with festivals marking the year's end and beginning: "What d'ye say to *Hopping John*, made Tom Nottle's fashion?–Landlord, mix pint of brandy wi' half a gallon of your best cider, sugared to your own taste; and pop in about a dozen good roasted apples, hissing hot, to take the chill off."

Compare this, please, to America's own frontier tipple, applejack, the brandy anyone could make by letting cider harden. To further stir up trouble, let the King of Bean point out that the usual basis of wassail, before the spices and apples are added, is ale, a "hopped" drink, to use a brewing expression. It is made from an infusion of malt with hops added.

Our King of Bean has marched us around a corkscrew path, laughing at us from the shadows, I suspect.

So what *is* the origin of the term "hopping John"?

"I don't know," said folklorist Hall, when I asked her.

"I don't know," said Katherine Kirlin, coauthor of the *Smithsonian Folklife Cookbook*, which contains one of the recipes on the accompanying insert card. Kirlin was raised in the South, and black-eyed peas grew in her grandfather's garden. Hopping John has been bringing her family good fortune as long as she can remember.

"I don't know," Professor Wiggins echoed. But William Wiggins does have his own favorite recipe for hopping John (see insert card). Give both versions a try. Good luck and Happy New Year!

One explanation for the puzzling name "hopping John" has it that children were made to hop around the table before eating black-eyed peas and rice, a custom that may have come from old fire-hopping rites.

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By Rudy Abramson

From the beginning Berea nurtured those most in need

It is one of the finest small colleges in the country, but if you can afford to pay the price of admission, chances are you won't get in

Linda Gadd declared her independence on a crisp, sunny morning in January 1989. She was then 35 years old and already a grandmother. She had been one of ten children of alcoholic parents who would disappear for days, leaving her in charge of six younger siblings. When she was 13, she had dropped out of school to marry a 21-year-old farmer in Rockcastle County, Kentucky. Her first baby arrived the following year, and by the time she was 20 she was the mother of five, consigned to a ramshackle farmhouse. Her life, up to that point, was a stereotypical Appalachian tragedy.

In the fall of 1987, a generation after she completed the eighth grade, Gadd fulfilled the requirements for a high school equivalency certificate, but that accomplishment did nothing to improve her circumstances. Her interest in books and signs of personal aspiration, she felt, only made her husband feel threatened and angry. So on this Monday morning in January, she packed a flimsy suitcase and drove ten miles up Scaffold Cane Road to Berea College where she enrolled in its New Opportunity School for Women.

Ensconced in a handsome old Victorian-style house near a stand of tall oaks where the college campus meets the town of Berea, the school is a place for mountain women who are down to their last chance. Its founder and director is Jane Stephenson, whose husband, John B. Stephenson, is Berea's president. Being a mountain woman herself, she had long known there were Linda Gadds throughout Appalachia–and in recent years, their numbers have been increasing.

They're poor, widowed, divorced and sometimes abused; wives with dreams deferred, needing education, wanting jobs, wishing to change their lives but not knowing how to start or where to turn. To Jane Stephenson, helping them seemed an obvious undertaking for Berea, an institution mandated by its founders to serve the poor of the nation's poorest region. In 1987 the New Opportunity School accepted its first group of these women for a crash course in self-esteem.

Gadd and a dozen classmates in the winter of '89 were treated to manicures and facials, given new hairstyles and outfitted in dresses suitable for job hunters and office workers. A physician offered them mammograms and Pap smears, and professors told them inspiring stories of strong and successful women. Counselors tested them, coached them in résumé writing and job interviews, and sent them out to campus offices and local agencies for brief internships.

All of this is crammed into a mere three weeks, which would seem to be too little time to turn lives around,

Larry Rivers and Cutressa Williams chat on Kentucky campus. Both were recruited from Alabama by Berea.

Fraternity brothers posed for a classic football-team photograph around the turn of the century. The college was established to serve two minorities–former slave families and impoverished white people of Appalachia.

but 140 women have finished the program and most of them have gone on to jobs or college. Gadd, who eventually divorced her husband and reclaimed her maiden name, Linda Lamb, did both. She is now within striking distance of a degree from Eastern Kentucky University, 12 miles up the road. Meanwhile she is working in the social services department of Berea Hospital.

The women who attend the New Opportunity School are not typical college students, obviously, but then Berea is not a typical liberal arts college. From the day it opened its doors in 1855, it has gone its own stubborn, sometimes radical way. It was the first interracial college in the South. It was unequivocally coeducational long before higher education for women was fashionable. In the face of stern disapproval by some locals, it welcomed Japanese-American students from government internment camps soon after Pearl Harbor.

For more than a century and a quarter, Berea has been educating those who otherwise would never see the inside of a college classroom. Long before decent roads reached into rural Appalachia, it sent teachers and speakers into the mountains on muleback and dispatched traveling libraries by riverboat, railroad car and horse-drawn wagon. Today, its 1,500 students pay no tuition, and most pay only a portion of their room and board–this in an era when the average bill for a year in a private four-year college has risen to more than $14,000. The bargain is made possible by a whopping endowment of $360 million–one of the largest among small colleges in America–a rejection of frills and strategic use of student labor. Every student is required to work 10 to 15 hours each week for Berea.

Not surprisingly, as many as 18,000 inquiries pour into the college annually from potential applicants. Most need not bother to write, for the first requirement for the 450 or so students admitted each autumn is financial need. "It doesn't matter how bright a student is, how high he can jump, or how well he can sing," says admissions director John Cook. "If he doesn't meet the need criterion, he cannot come to Berea."

Photographs by Gail Mooney

Founder Rev. John Fee, an outspoken abolitionist, was forced to flee Kentucky until the end of the Civil War.

Mary E. Britton, who attended Berea in the 1870s, was the first black female physician in Lexington.

Finding needy students in Appalachia has never been a problem. More than half of each year's new class falls into the category of "total need." In other words, these students are unable to make any financial contribution to their schooling.

Year after year, most Berea students are the first members of their families ever to attend college. Yet, remarkably, in a 15-state southeastern region, only North Carolina's prestigious Davidson College has seen a higher percentage of its alumni go on to earn PhD degrees in the past century. More than half of Berea's graduates eventually receive advanced degrees.

One reason for this success is Berea's emphasis on teaching rather than research. Classes are tiny; the student-teacher ratio is 13 to 1. More than 80 percent of the faculty members have doctorates. The place is teeming with Berea alumni who have returned to spend their careers in the same venerable buildings where they were undergraduates.

History department chairman Paul David Nelson, a biographer and recognized authority on the American Revolutionary period, originally came to Berea from a tobacco farm in southwestern Virginia, graduating in 1965. Five years later, after receiving his PhD from Duke University, he came back to teach. "I don't think for a moment that Berea is perfect in doing everything it professes to do," he says, "but institutionally, it comes as close as one can ever expect. It is idealistic, it stands for something, and that is why I stay."

Outwardly, it appears a quintessential small-town college. Its quiet, shaded campus is immaculately kept, its brick buildings defy the ravages of age, an old clock softly tolls each quarter-hour. But beneath the tranquillity, Berea suffers more than ordinary stresses and strains, trying to serve sometimes conflicting objectives and keep old commitments without becoming a throwback to another time.

Before Berea became a college, it was a one-room school and church–the cornerstone of the Rev. John Fee's audacious attempt to create, in the midst of a slave state, an institution that "would be to Kentucky what Oberlin is to Ohio, antislavery, anti-caste, anti-rum, anti-sin." Early in the winter of 1859, vigilantes, aroused by rumors of a slave insurrection, forced Fee and his flock of 34 to flee to Ohio. When they returned from exile at the end of the Civil War, Fee had raised enough

Mr. Abramson reports from Washington, D.C. for the Los Angeles Times. *His biography of W. Averell Harriman was published last year by William Morrow.*

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money to expand the school and church into a college.

Founded in 1833 to train preachers and teachers, Fee's model, Oberlin College in northern Ohio, was Christian, coeducational and interracial. The town of Oberlin had been a station on the Underground Railroad, helping slaves escape to freedom. It provided Fee not only with an inspiration, but with the nucleus of a staff as well. Berea's first teachers and four of its first five presidents had Oberlin connections.

In the beginning, Fee's school was committed to serving two minorities united only by the Christian ethic–former slaves and the impoverished whites of Appalachia. During the last few decades of the 19th century, many of its graduates earned distinction as educators, ministers and physicians. Not the least of these were Mary E. Britton, who attended the college from 1871 to 1874 and became the first black female doctor to practice in Lexington, and Carter G. Woodson, a 1903 alumnus who is known today as the "father of black history."

Born in Virginia, Woodson attended Berea during summers while working as a high school principal. His parents had been slaves, and he was largely self-taught until he entered high school. After graduating from Berea, he went on to obtain advanced degrees from the University of Chicago and Harvard, and devoted the rest of his life to the study and preservation of African-American history. He died in 1950.

Berea's quest for utopia was dashed in 1904 when Kentucky outlawed interracial education. For more than 40 years thereafter, Berea was an all-white institution. Black enrollment has never returned to the 50 percent levels of the pre-1904 era, but the old commitments still resonate on campus. Berea "is a rock in the stream of higher education," says John Stephenson, a sociologist and Appalachian scholar who will step down in 1994 after a decade as president. The ever-present danger, he adds, is that it will be swept along "and turned into just another good liberal arts college."

For now such danger seems remote. There is still vitality in being different, and the New Opportunity School for Women is but one of a hotbed of activities that sets the college apart. The Brushy Fork Institute works to stimulate grass-roots leadership in mountain communities. The Black Mountain Youth Leadership Program and the Black Mountain Improvement Association conduct summer studies for African-American teenagers and coordinate literacy programs in eastern Kentucky, Virginia and West Virginia. And Students for Appalachia deploys scores of volunteers to work in the community.

During her first year in Students for Appalachia, Stephanie Flanary, a senior from Grundy, Virginia, spent each Saturday with a 92-year-old woman who lived alone, making it possible for her to avoid moving into a nursing home. Arriving in the morning, the young volunteer carried in enough coal and wood to fire a heater for several days and shopped for groceries before heading back to campus. Tara Eckard, a math education major, is driven to Lexington to work in a nursing home each week and to Mount Vernon, Kentucky, where she spends several hours with a 7-year-old girl whose father is terminally ill. Brian Jones organized a "read-in," bringing adult "new readers" to the campus to talk about their learning experiences and to read in public for the first time. An audience of more than a hundred

Members of Berea's "extension" faculty set off on an assignment in mountain communities circa 1900.

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EVERYTHING YOU EVER DREAMED OF.

Head teacher Sandra Redmon works with children at Berea campus childcare center. A graduate of the New Opportunity School for Women, Redmon was an intern at center and returned later to teach full-time.

turned out, and the next day the telephone rang often at Students for Appalachia–new volunteers to work as tutors in the adult reading program.

Jones is a story. He first entered Berea in 1987, but withdrew after a semester in which he not only failed to pass anything but violated the rules against drinking and using drugs. Before enrolling there he had been kicked out of the Air Force and even lived briefly among the homeless in Southern California. His heavy drinking continued after he left college; he married, but it didn't last; he tended bar, worked as a bouncer and was employed for a time in a sock factory. Eventually, feeling he was at a dead end, he wrote the registrar at Berea, pleading to be taken back. He was. Now 25 years old and in his junior year, he is an honor student and coordinator of some 200 students who do volunteer work through Students for Appalachia.

Pastor Fee and his associates could not have dreamed what they were starting when they promised to provide Berea's students with jobs to offset their expenses. For two hours each afternoon, Tenpa Dhargyal, a Tibetan who grew up in exile in India, sits at a table in the school's broom shop cutting cornstalks into thin strips with a razor-sharp knife. It is a task devoid of real challenge, Dhargyal concedes, but it is the first time he has worked with his hands, and it has taught him patience. The narrow strips he trims will be dyed and plaited into sheaths connecting the handles to the business ends of handmade brooms. The brooms are sold in shops on campus and in nearby cities and through catalog sales.

As Dhargyal wields his knife, Becky Lowery, an art major from Georgia, is up the street working at a pottery wheel, and Amy Miller, who aspires to attend medical school, is at the college loom house weaving a rug. The campus workday begins at 6 A.M., when students report for the breakfast shift at the cafeteria and at the dining room of the Boone Tavern Hotel, which the college owns and operates. Altogether, there are more than 140 different types of jobs to be done. Freshmen can earn $1.95 per hour for waiting tables at the hotel, upperclassmen up to $3.90 for the top supervisory jobs in the school's own little civil service system. Besides working in food services, serving in social outreach programs, making crafts and staffing the 57-room hotel,

Berea students act as teaching assistants, secretaries, janitors and computer operators.

The work program has been a vital part of the school from the beginning. Students built roads, helped clear and fence a farm adjacent to the campus, and made bricks for the first masonry building, a women's dormitory still in service after 120 years. Phelps Stokes Chapel, the site of concerts, convocations and foul-weather commencement ceremonies, was constructed entirely by student workers at the insistence of Olivia Phelps Stokes, a New York philanthropist who donated the money for it. Scholar-workers ran a dairy with 100 cows; they pasteurized and bottled milk, then delivered it in town. They collected eggs from a flock of 4,000 chickens, operated a bakery and cannery, raised cattle, hogs and sheep, and tended extensive vegetable gardens.

In time, it became cheaper to buy milk elsewhere. Besides, says William Ramsay, who was dean of labor when a number of the food-based enterprises were shut down, "it became more relevant to know how to operate a computer than to gather eggs."

Work-study arrangements are still commonplace in colleges and universities across the country, but Berea is one of only five schools that make student jobs obligatory for all students. Not even varsity athletes are exempt. A few years ago, when the men's basketball team returned from the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics' championship tournament in Kansas City, the players had to make up hours lost from their assignments as janitors and hotel clerks.

Nearly unnoticed in a state where basketball is a cult transcending politics, race and religion, Berea coach Roland Wierwille has guided his teams to 323 victories in 21 years without benefit of a single athletic scholarship. More important, in Berea's scheme of things, all of his four-year players have gone on to graduate, a statistic perhaps unmatched by any other school in the country. "Winning national championships at the University of Kentucky couldn't bring me greater satisfaction than I have here," Wierwille says. "The reward is not winning, but winning the right way."

Baskets and brooms from Berea to Japan

Berea may be the only college in the country with a winning basketball team that is overshadowed by a crafts program. With the popularity of its pottery, woodworks and weaving, it is often mistakenly thought to be a crafts school. In 1992 sales of crafts made mainly by students exceeded $2 million. More than $100,000 worth of brooms were exported to Japan, England and Italy. When Toyota station wagons, assembled in Georgetown, Kentucky, were shipped to Japan for sale, the manufacturer bought $50,000 worth of Berea's baskets and carved letter openers to present to Japan-

Berea student Brian Jones tutors Gary Davidson as part of Berea's ambitious community outreach program.

During her weekly hospital visit, student Tara Eckard discusses needlework with Stella Dees, a patient.

Sarah Hawkins weaves place mats at hand loom. Berea's first student industry, weaving was started in 1893.

Tenpa Dhargyal, a junior who works ten hours a week making brooms, attaches a leather loop to a handle.

ese car buyers as authentication of American quality.

It was college president William Frost who first made the connection between Berea and mountain crafts in the early 1890s, when he and his wife spent a summer traveling the backwoods of Kentucky, Tennessee and North Carolina. They returned with two meal sacks bulging with homespun coverlets and quilts they had seen in cabins they visited. Berea began selling them to its financial supporters, raising money for both the college and the artisans.

Soon mountain women were coming to Berea to weave at a collective set up on campus and to teach their craft to female students; it was the beginning of the student industries. A few years later, Wallace Nutting, the famed New England photographer, furniture designer and collector, led the school into another craft field. Enchanted by the campus when he visited it as a commencement speaker in the early 1900s, Nutting invited Berea carpentry instructors to his factory in Framingham, Massachusetts, to learn furniture-making skills. "We believe that working with the hands, making things of high quality, is good for character," says Garry Barker, who is in charge of marketing the products that Berea students make. "You learn things about dedication, workmanship and the quality of materials–things that carry over into the rest of your life."

That may be so, but there is a certain uneasiness these days about the crafts program–partly because it has drifted so far from its mountain roots, partly because some question whether it still fits in with the college's purposes. The time has come, says Stephenson, to take a hard look at it. "My guess is that we will decide that it serves a useful public relations function in introducing people to the name of Berea College. We will probably decide that it shouldn't grow any more and that, in fact, it might be downsized."

If the growth of the crafts program has exceeded all expectations, the same cannot be said about the number of black students matriculating at Berea. Carl Thomas, who graduated from Berea in 1978, is a full-time, paid recruiter for his alma mater. Among his prime territories are the black neighborhoods and high schools of Birmingham, Alabama. Each February, which is Black History Month, he takes a chartered bus full of promising prospects to Berea for a weekend visit. "If I can get young people to the campus, I can convince them that this is a place where they want to spend the next four years," he says. "It's a culture shock for them at first, but they feel a warmth, and they soon feel a part of what is going on." Over the past 15 years, about 170 African-American students who have made the trip have returned to enroll.

One of them, Tallese Johnson, was a senior at the virtually all-black A. H. Parker High School in Birmingham in 1989. From the time she began thinking of college, Johnson had wanted to attend predominantly

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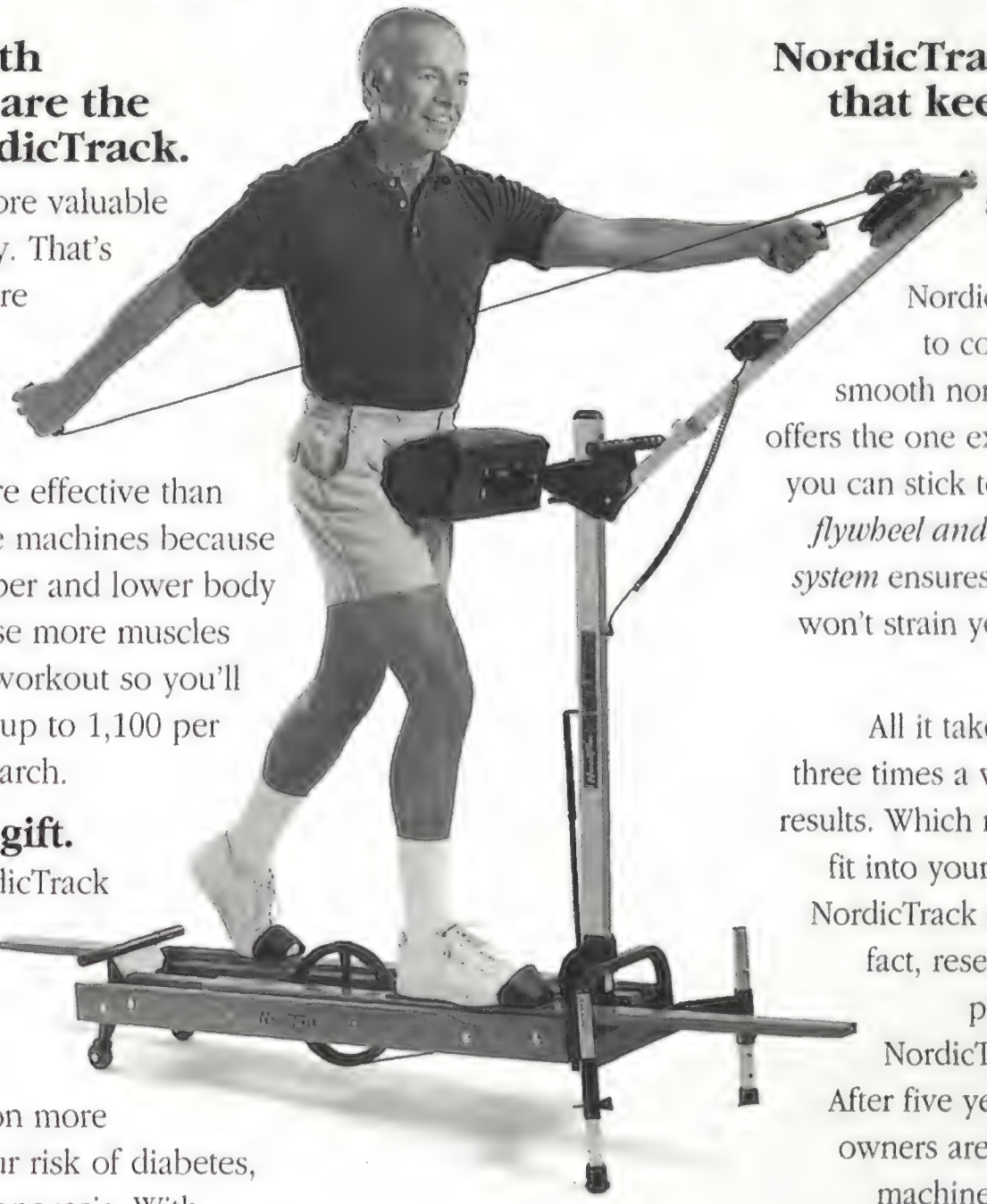

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black Howard University in Washington, D.C., but she joined the bus trip to Kentucky because of the powerful appeal of free tuition at Berea. "It was like no place I had ever seen," she recalls. The picturesque campus had only a few hundred more students than her high school, and most of them were white. "But people immediately made me feel comfortable, and that weekend I decided that Berea was my school."

Some of the white students Johnson met had been equally isolated in their own culture. Tim Lawson from Floyd County, Kentucky, for one, had grown up in an all-white mountain community, attended an all-white high school and had made his first friendship with a black person when he arrived at Berea. But from these cultural extremes there somehow comes a surprisingly easy social atmosphere. "I think it's in part because we're all here as a result of financial need," Johnson says. "We're all in the same boat."

As the Alabama recruiting suggests, the college has found it increasingly difficult to live up to its interracial commitment. Rural Appalachia's black population, historically concentrated in scattered coal-mining communities, dropped sharply during the 1980s. Across the region served by the college, blacks now account for about 5 percent of the population. By the mid-1980s, minority enrollment hovered at about 6 percent, and in 1988 President Stephenson set a goal of a student body with 15 percent by 1993. "In the 19th century, nobody except Oberlin, Berea and a handful of others would even take a second look at black students," he says. "Now we find ourselves competing with many other institutions that also want African-American students."

To raise money, members of Berea's agricultural club cut tobacco leaves on a farm not far from the college.

A feeling of abandonment among blacks

But there is more to it than that. Fee's vision had already been dimmed when the Kentucky Legislature banned interracial education. President Frost, an Oberlin graduate, arrived at a time when black students outnumbered whites. Unlike Fee, he saw the moral uplifting of whites as the principal benefit of interracial education. He promptly focused on increasing white enrollment and emphasized the school's interest in mountain people. While there was only a small drop in black enrollment, whites poured in and by 1904, when Kentucky issued its interracial ban, blacks amounted to only 16 percent.

"There was a feeling among blacks that Berea had abandoned them," says Loyal Jones, who recently retired as director of the college's Appalachian Center. "And understandably so. It would have been quite logical for Berea to have said that since blacks and whites could not be educated together, then the school would educate blacks. But when you got right down to it, the whites won out, even at an idealistic place like Berea."

With that decision made, the board of trustees led a campaign that raised more than $400,000 to create the Lincoln Institute, a new black vocational school near Louisville. Blacks did not rush back to Berea when Kentucky removed its racial barrier in 1950. In fact, only three enrolled the first year.

The college fell short of Stephenson's 15 percent target for 1993. Thanks considerably to successful recruiting in Alabama, the presence of black students on campus in recent years has hovered at around 9 or 10 percent. Conditions steadily become more challenging for the rock in the stream. Admissions director John Cook frequently sees young people who are prime Berea material walk away. Many potential students are unwilling to enroll in a college where they cannot have an automobile. They opt for less-restrictive public institutions and for part-time jobs that pay them more than the Berea work program.

Unlike the days when most of those who enrolled at Berea saw it as their only chance for college, higher education has come to be viewed increasingly as an entitlement. "Nowadays [young people] have the option of

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going to a community college, and most of them can get enough assistance to go to a four-year state college," says Cook. "So it is unrealistic for the trustees or the administration to say to us, 'Take only the students who have no other opportunity.'"

Is it also unrealistic for the college to stick to its long-standing restrictions on cars and coeducational dorms? Some students believe so; the administration disagrees. The ban on automobiles, it is said, helps to preserve the college's residential character and reassures donors who are asked to contribute to an institution serving the financially disadvantaged.

Berea has never been the same since World War II, when most of its male students went into military service, and officer trainees in the Navy's V-12 program arrived to study on campus. A ban on smoking was modified, as was the long-time policy prohibiting female students from wearing high heels or "fancy" shoes. The college began sponsoring dances, eased curfews and relaxed restrictions on leaving campus.

After the war, Berea men returned more worldly, more demanding, and began engaging in such unprecedented high jinks as covering the lawn of the president's house with manure from the dairy.

Years ago, required attendance at Sunday evening convocation was dropped because it smacked of compulsory religion. The student body, with 5 percent of each new class reserved for international students, now represents nearly 50 countries and includes Buddhists, Muslims and Hindus. Although the college still emphasizes the Christian ethic, there is no longer a firm requirement that faculty members profess a religious belief. One small student residence is even reserved for single mothers and their children.

Nevertheless, the founders' core agenda survives in a declaration of "Great Commitments," which are regarded as the college's Magna Carta. Last year the trustees reaffirmed those commitments, but they also acknowledged today's sensibilities by adding a separate pledge to "gender equity." To make sure that the point is not missed, they changed the school seal designed by the founders–a cross encircled by the words "God Hath Made of One Blood All Nations of Men." It now reads, "God Has Made of One Blood All Peoples of the Earth."

A lone student hurries past the Draper classroom building. The picturesque campus occupies 140 acres on a narrow ridge in the eastern part of Kentucky that overlooks a surrounding plain of farmland and forests.

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By Constance Bond

A 'collection' of palettes surfaces in New Jersey

Can you believe it? When tools of painters from El Greco to Duchamp were up for grabs, Stanley Meltzoff just happened to be there

Stanley Meltzoff (opposite), a shy and retiring artist and scholar, has put together an amazing collection of famous artists' palettes, like that of Seurat (above).

If there's such a thing as an insider in the art world, Stanley Meltzoff is it. Just look at the evidence. He's a renowned scholar: his tome on Italian painting won a prestigious Mitchell Prize in 1988 for excellence in art history; now he is coauthoring a book with legendary art historian Sir Ernst Gombrich. He's also a renowned artist: his award-winning paintings of fish in their natural habitat are the product of thousands of hours spent snorkeling the hemisphere's waters. And remember those picture series of ancient history in the old *Life* magazines–paintings of exciting Mediterranean sea battles, for example, with clashing triremes and surging waves? Meltzoff again.

So when word spread that Meltzoff had quietly assembled a remarkable "collection"–more than 60 palettes and brushes of great artists–we were, quite naturally, curious. Interest heightened with the appearance of the official checklist for the "Meltzoff Reliquarium," printed on fine ivory paper stock, which included descriptions of the objects, each with its accession number. Further investigation was in order.

On pulling into the driveway of Meltzoff's unassuming wood frame house in Fair Haven, New Jersey, one sees no sign or other clue announcing the presence of the collection. But at the back of the house is Meltzoff's huge skylit studio and, on its walls, guarded day and night by his parrots Xochi Pila and Chuck, are the very palettes and brushes themselves.

Scrutinizing them one by one, the visitor is struck by how they seem almost too real to be true. Here, for example, is an odd paint-covered utensil found by Jackson Pollock's studio. Could this be of relevance to Pollock's drip paintings? Nearby is Claes Oldenburg's "palate" (p. 108), which surely provides insight to scholars who study Oldenburg's fast-food iconography. These two artifacts will probably be the subjects of many PhD dissertations to come.

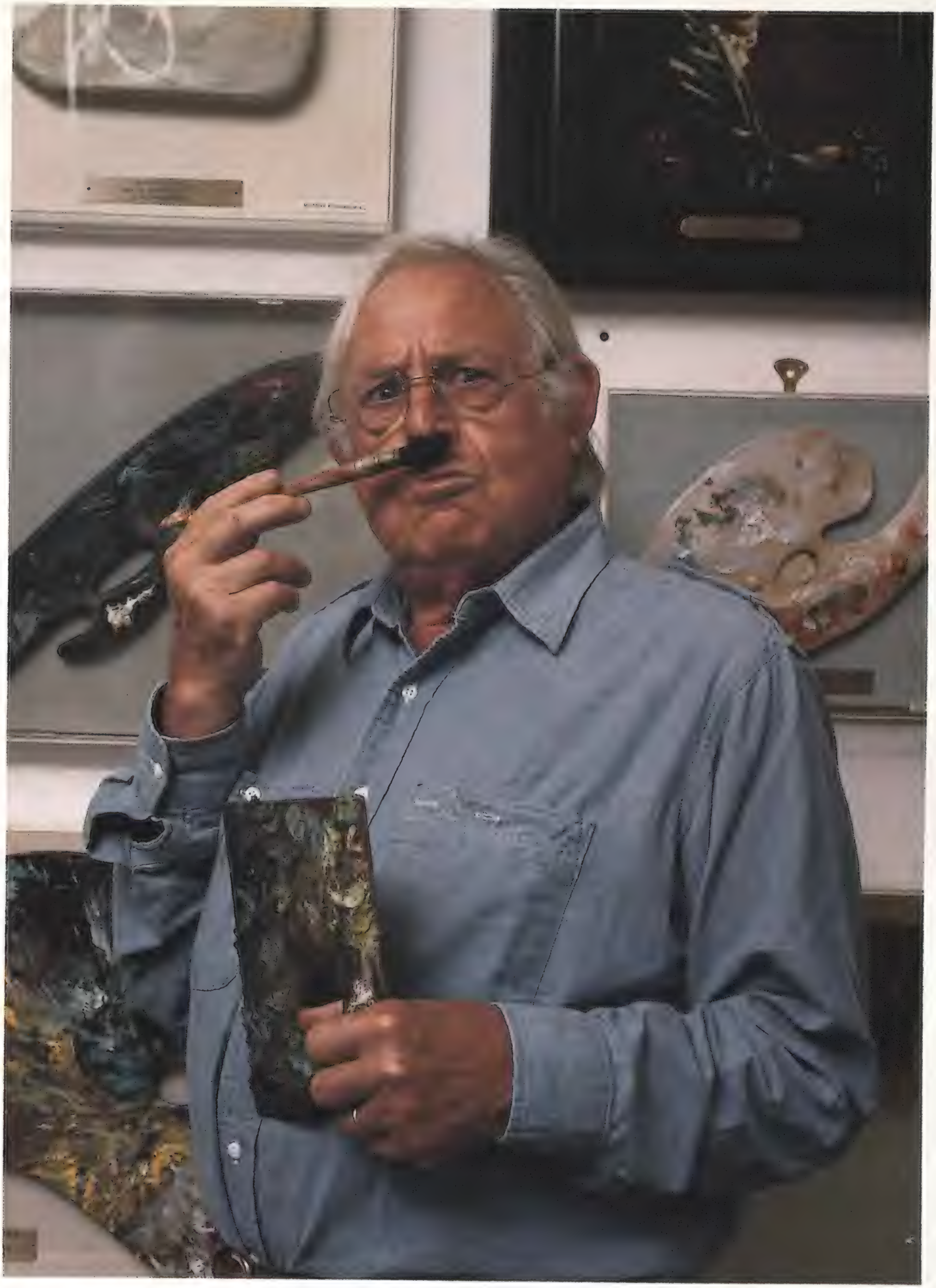
Still, it's puzzling how these palettes and brushes got into Meltzoff's hands. In talking with him, one can't help but be impressed with his astonishingly wide network of contacts and his uncanny luck of being in exactly the right place at the right time. Asked about the Pollock acquisition, he replies, "I happened to be going by Pollock's studio the morning after he died and I found it." And the brush of Sir Edwin Landseer, famous 19th-century English painter of dogs? "I had to collect that from the widow of a retired London dogcatcher." Pressed about others, he finally admits, "You don't want to know, because the amount of skulduggery and bribery and actual armed robbery would make your hair stand on end."

The visitor bids farewell, then pauses and turns apologetically. "One last question. Is it possible that any of these palettes are . . . er . . . uh . . . fake?"

Meltzoff lights up. "I know what you're thinking! All kinds of artists have tried to foist stuff off on me. But I won't take something straight from the hand of an artist. I always get an affidavit from a connoisseur or an art historian guaranteeing the object's authenticity–even if that affidavit comes from myself."

His answer is a great relief. Meltzoff seems to have thought of everything. It would, after all, be horrible to contemplate this devoted collector's being duped by some unscrupulous prankster.

Photographs by Henry Groskinsky



An odd utensil (left) found by the studio of Jackson Pollock, American action painter; one can only theorize about how it was used.

Palette of El Greco. Does it throw new light on the theory that he had an astigmatism? Or did he just like the shape of his birthplace, Crete?

At right, palette of Swiss artist Jean Tinguely– some of the workshop materials for *Hommage à New York* (1960); it's labeled on the back, "Made in Hong Kong."

The "palate" of Claes Oldenburg, American pop artist. Whether the artist ever used it or not, it is of interest in regurgitating the taste of the 1970s.

Palette of Vincent Van Gogh (above). Incredibly, it is said to have been found in the attic of the artist's brother, Theo, an art dealer in Paris.

Palette of Marcel Duchamp (left). The artist may have used this in his studio after selling the front and back wheels of his bicycle to museums.

This "doggy brush" might have faithfully served Sir Edwin Landseer, 19th-century English animal painter. It was coaxed from the widow of a London dogcatcher.

By Avis Berman

George du Maurier's *Trilby* whipped up a worldwide storm

His 19th-century novel celebrating la vie de bohème *spawned plays and films–and had young women heading for artists' garrets*

Josef von Sternberg was accused of being Marlene Dietrich's Svengali, and the same was said about Diaghilev's association with Nijinsky. Everyone knows that to call someone a "Svengali" is to label that person a sinister being who uses his or her power to dominate others. The name has been absorbed into the language as irrevocably as "Simon Legree" as a definition of cruelty, or "Scrooge" of parsimony. But unlike these other archetypal literary characters, whose failings have entered our vocabulary as synonyms for infamy, Svengali's origins are forgotten, and the novel in which he was introduced is now hardly ever read.

Yet Svengali, who made his debut 100 years ago, was the villain–literally, the mesmerizing force–animating one of the most spectacular best-sellers of the 19th century. The book, a Gothic melodrama titled *Trilby*, by George du Maurier, was amazing not only in volume of sales, but in the influence it had in glamorizing a romantic social phenomenon. For what *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was to the abolition of slavery and *A Christmas Carol* was to the Christmas-cheer industry, *Trilby*, with its thrilling familiarity with Parisian art-student days in the Latin Quarter and models who posed in the nude, was to the glorification of *la vie de bohème.*

Laughable as it may seem today, respectable, novel-reading young ladies searching for a way to assert themselves fantasized about emulating Trilby, the tragic young artist's model. Since du Maurier's heroine lived on her own and by her wits, she symbolized independence and free-spirited adventure to those whose parents or husbands controlled their destinies. A first step toward liberation, it seemed, was to move–or more likely, to *talk* about moving–to an attic in New York or Paris and be immortalized on canvas or in bronze. This alarmed the clergy and other guardians of morality. The book became the target of two years' worth of debates, sermons, editorials, pageants, parodies and advertising pitches. *Trilby* erupted into a boom, a craze, a mania and a publicity bonanza, and its impact rivaled any media frenzies that our mega-sellers like Shirley MacLaine and Robert Bly have whipped up when they purveyed their own private mythologies.

Trilby's genesis was as freakish as its popularity was overwhelming. George du Maurier did not apply himself to writing until the age of 55, with only another seven years to live and a whole other career behind him. Since the early 1860s, du Maurier had been a prominent cartoonist for *Punch*, his satirical realm the snubs, preten-

The 1931 film *Svengali* glamorized its male characters, with Bramwell Fletcher as the less wispy Little Billee, Marian Marsh (here as Trilby and as painted by Billee) and John Barrymore as a heartthrob Svengali. The author (above) was so plagued by the novel's acclaim he said his next title would be "Soured by Success."

sions and maneuverings of the drawing room and other catchpools of English social life. His great friend Henry James hardly knew what to make of du Maurier's unsuspected talent, marveling about people who "begin to dash off brilliant novels in the afternoon of existence."

No one would call *Trilby* brilliant anymore, and James himself admitted that he was mystified by the popularity of the story of Trilby O'Ferrall, a Scotch-Irish grisette adored by three British art students living and working in Paris. Nobly rethinking her engagement to one of them, she flees and falls into the hands of Svengali, the evil musician. Trilby turns into a great singer under Svengali's hypnotic influence, only to lose her voice when his death releases his grip on her. The combination of the sprightly Left Bank setting, then a surefire attraction, and a plot turning on the manipulation of a beautiful young woman by the usurpation of her will took the public by storm.

The twofold world of *Trilby* seemed to appeal to almost everyone. Readers of gentle impulse were charmed by du Maurier's humorous portraits of the bohemian art students in Trilby and Svengali's orbit. More sensationally, du Maurier fascinated and frightened audiences with the notion of an alien power conquering that dearly held Victorian quality of will–and by implication, sexual resistance.

Another reason why *Trilby* sold and sold is that the novel's main characters are intriguingly fraught with paradox. Svengali, a masterly villain, is menacing, unscrupulous and physically dirty, but he is not a charlatan. As a first-rate professional musician, he is a considerably more impressive artist than the dull, self-righteous Englishmen who are presented as the story's heroes. James perceptively noted that it was Svengali who had "infinite feeling" and "the sacred fire," invoking the myths of Orpheus and Prometheus.

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Sir Edward Poynter, onetime bohemian, became a National Gallery director.

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Trilby, the focus of the artists' and Svengali's erotic fantasies, was an equally daring conception. Like most heroines of the day, she was sweet, pretty, generous and impulsive. But Trilby also smoked, swore and, most dreadful of all, she had slept with several men

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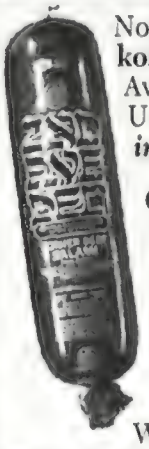

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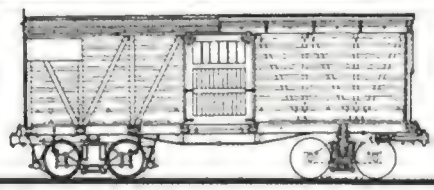

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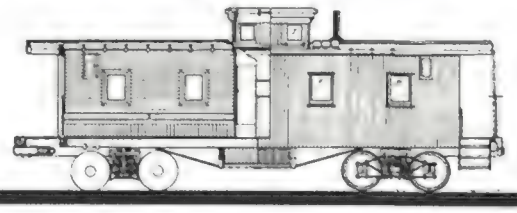

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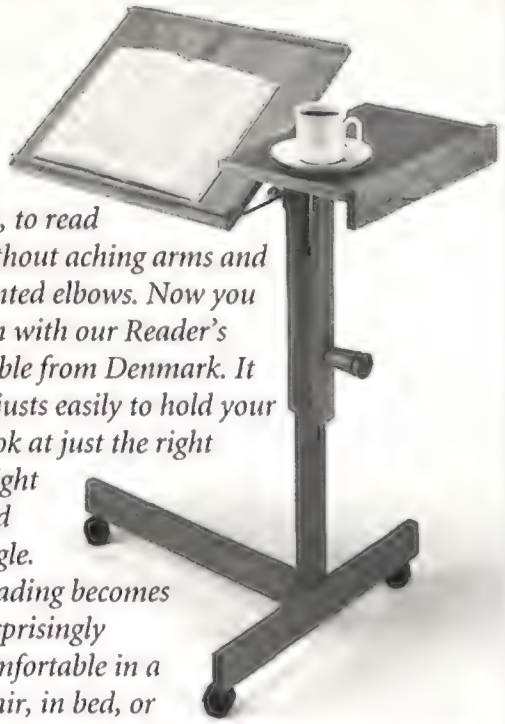

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and felt no guilt about it. Even more controversial than Trilby's lack of chastity was her larger relationship to conventional morality. Her bohemian friends use her as a model, a cook and a seamstress, and they encourage her in her role as a household drudge. Only by her association with Svengali does Trilby become a creative artist, with her own talent to enchant the public. No matter how diabolical, Svengali offers her a much more dynamic future than do the narrow-minded art students who represent the forces of respectability. Very pointedly, it is not Svengali, the sexual predator, but the adoring painter Little Billee and his family, the sexual prudes, who destroy Trilby. This renegade sentiment was strong fare for the times.

Born in 1834 to an English mother and French father, George du Maurier grew up bilingual and binational, passing his childhood mainly in France and Britain. His ambition was to be a painter or a singer, and in 1856 he enrolled in the Parisian atelier of Charles Gleyre, spending most of his free time in the Latin Quarter studio used by himself and four other easygoing students. Two of them, Thomas Lamont and Thomas Armstrong, remained minor figures in the English art world. The other two were a different story. The third Englishman, Edward Poynter, was a pedestrian stylist and already a bit stuffy. Later, full of honors, he became director of the National Gallery in London. The fourth man, a flamboyant American most un-Poynterish, was James Abbott McNeill Whistler. French novelist Louis-Henri Murger, author of *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème*, was his role model, and tales were already circulating about his eccentricity. One hot day when he had no money, Whistler pawned his coat for a cold drink and went around in his shirtsleeves for three days until he had the money to redeem it.

Avis Berman writes on the arts; her biography James McNeill Whistler *was published by Abrams in October.*

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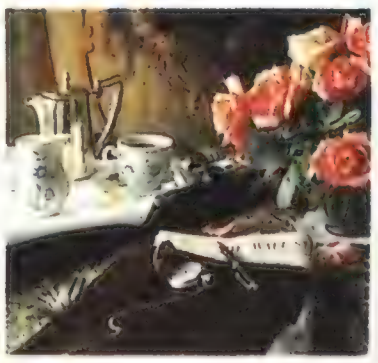

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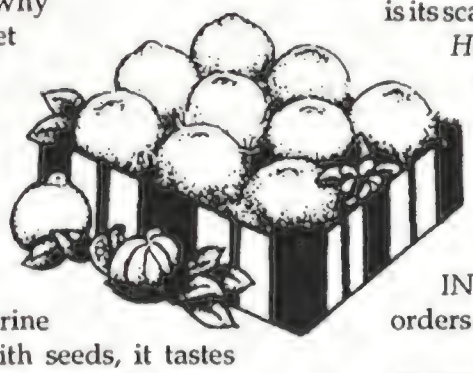

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Du Maurier had never known such wonderful camaraderie, and the adventures of these "brothers in art" would be minutely recalled in *Trilby*. As in the book, he and his gang copied Old Masters at the Louvre, chaffed each other at Gleyre's, argued, sang, danced and prepared a Christmas dinner for the neighborhood. Their Paris days were an interlude of freedom and experiment, to be cherished before reputations and responsibilities set in.

After Paris, du Maurier went to study in Antwerp. While in class one day, he suddenly lost the sight of his left eye. He had evidently suffered a detached retina, but poor treatment left the injured eye permanently blind. Convinced that he could never be a painter, du Maurier spent many months bemoaning his fate until a friend sent him a copy of *Punch*, the great English humor magazine. Du Maurier studied its lively pages and saw that a career as an illustrator could be worth pursuing.

Arriving in London in May 1860, du Maurier looked up the old crowd in hopes of re-creating the carefree Paris days. For a while he did, smoking, drinking and tumbling around London until all hours. He shared a one-room studio with Whistler, who

Artist James McNeill Whistler was a pal in the author's roistering Paris days.

had settled in London the year before. Armstrong, Whistler and others gave du Maurier introductions to editors, and within a few months he was making a modest living as a freelance draftsman.

In early 1863, du Maurier got married, and in November 1864 he was asked to join the staff of *Punch*, on its way to becoming a national institution precisely because it was so British.

With these great changes in his life, notwithstanding his French ancestry and his affection for Paris, he became extremely English and adopted the *Punch* point of view: an unconventional person was apt to be affected and was probably a mountebank. Du Maurier began to distance himself from his old friends, especially the still-gregarious Whistler, who lived with a model and mingled with such disreputable types as Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Algernon Swinburne.

One du Maurier *Punch* cartoon lampooned an inarticulate Brit, unable to pop the question, repeating "Darling, Darling," to the disgust of an aged dyspeptic.

Du Maurier's increasing conservatism endowed him with the perfect pictorial sensibility for *Punch*. He excelled at capturing drawing-room vanities, yet his best barbs often were aimed at artists with whom he was once intimate. What Henry James called du Maurier's "most brilliant episode of his long connection with *Punch*" was his pouncing on the absurdities of the Aesthetic Movement via a decade of inspired cartoons lampooning local devotees of the precious in art and life. Du Maurier began with takeoffs on the

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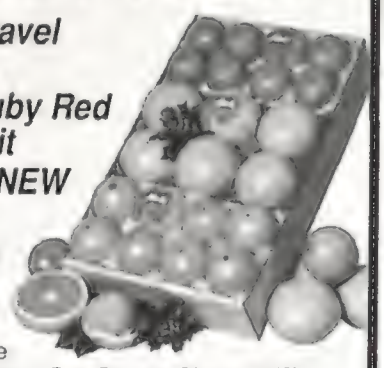

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vogue for collecting blue-and-white china, and settled in with his two star creations–Maudle, an Aesthetic painter who had his Whistlerian moments, and Jellaby Postlethwaite, an epicene poet obsessed with lilies. Postlethwaite was an obvious caricature of Oscar Wilde, lately down from Oxford and then known more for his poses and attitudes than for any literary achievement.

Often the most trenchant element of a du Maurier cartoon was the imagined conversation the artist composed for the caption, and years of writing these dialogues sharpened his prose style. By the late 1880s his drawings had become formulaic, and he worried about his good eye, which he was sure was deteriorating. He confided these misgivings to James, whom he got to know well when he illustrated the English and American editions of James' *Washington Square.*

On the evening of March 24, 1889, the two men met for a long talk. James was sometimes unable to concoct plots for his novels and tales, whereas du Maurier's mind was always teeming with themes and incidents. He had given James the idea for his short story "The Real Thing," and that spring day offered another story line. As James recalled, it was about a "servant girl with a wonderful rich full voice . . . who

A close friend of du Maurier's, author Henry James encouraged him to write.

is mesmerized and made to sing by a little foreign Jew." (Du Maurier's anti-Semitism and racism, which disfigure *Trilby* as well as his other writings, help explain why contemporary readers cannot enter into the novel's world with much sympathy.)

James declined du Maurier's suggestion, insisting his friend write the story himself. Du Maurier went home and started writing, but the novel he produced was *Peter Ibbetson*, based on his early childhood in France. He sent it to *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, which published the book in installments. Harper & Brothers came out with it as a complete work in 1891.

Du Maurier persevered with writing, working throughout 1892 on the manuscript of what would become *Trilby*.

The opening chapters recollecting his musketeering youth with Poynter, Lamont, Armstrong and Whistler, evoked in an easy conversational tone and patterned on Murger's *Scènes de la Vie de Bohème*, are a pleasure to read to this day. These are moments intensely savored, a succession of rosy yet achingly wistful memories that reveal a touching vulnerability. For at his best, du Maurier was a novelist of the backward glance.

Into this milieu are introduced the two fantastical characters and plot contrivances: Trilby, the working girl who poses for artists "in the altogether" (a phrase apparently coined by du Maurier, who was enough of a Victorian to avoid words like "naked" and "nude"), and Svengali, the malevolent music teacher who ogles Trilby loathesomely. Although Little Billee, the boyish English painter-to-be, is appalled that Trilby has surrendered her virtue, he is madly in love with her and her dainty feet, which he sketches on the wall of the communal studio. Somehow he overcomes his scruples and implores her to marry him. No sooner does Trilby agree to be his wife, than his mother arrives from England. The righteous matron begs Trilby not to marry her son and ruin his life. Trilby, as pure of heart as she is shamed in body, runs away, and Little Billee has a nervous breakdown. Soon after, the Paris atelier is broken up, and the story resumes five years later in London when Little Billee and his friends, modeled on Armstrong and Lamont, are reunited as genteel artistic nonentities.

Hearing of a magnificent singer named "La Svengali," they return to Paris to revisit old haunts and attend a concert given by the new diva, fresh from a sweep of half the capitals of Europe. The trio is shocked to discover that this divine creature is Trilby (who formerly couldn't sing a note), now the lover and protégée of Svengali. As long as she remains in his hypnotic power, she is a vocal phenomenon.

Later, with Trilby onstage in her London debut, Svengali has a heart

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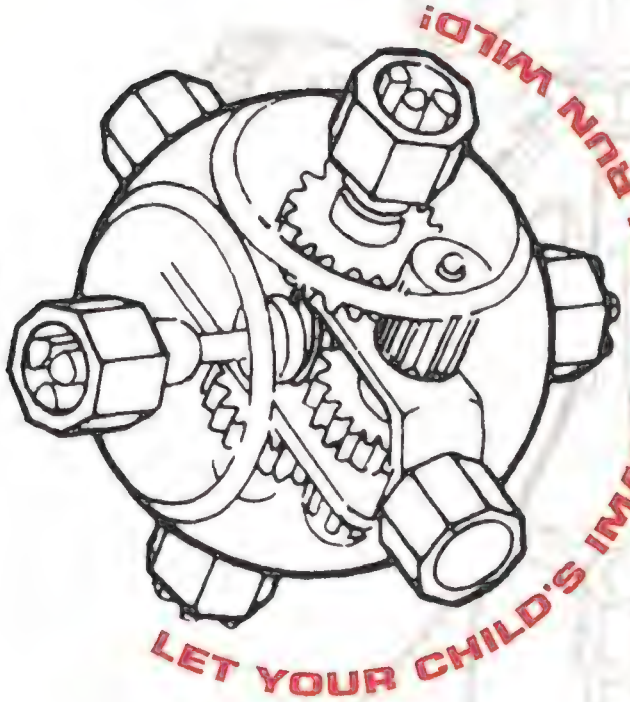

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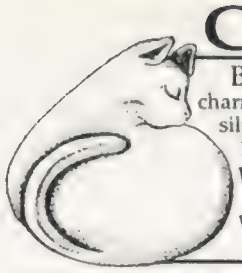
attack in his box and dies. She awakes from her trance, totally unaware of her triumphs as a recital star, and cannot sing a note.

Knowing that no woman with such a past can escape moral retribution, du Maurier kills off his heroine with prolonged death agonies. Little Billee expires a few pages later, and his compatriots tie up the tale.

Du Maurier had little faith in the market potential of his story which, like *Peter Ibbetson*, was serialized in *Harper's* before going into book form, but he had not counted on the reaction of his former friend Whistler. In the magazine version of *Trilby*, du Maurier had assigned a small but pungent role to an American art student named Joe Sibley, a debonair but unreliable sort nicknamed "the idle apprentice." Sibley wore outlandish clothes, slept through his classes, reneged on his debts, flew into fits over trifles and was mendacious enough to merit a comparison with Svengali. This verbal portrait, abetted by unmistakable illustrations, was instantly recognizable as the saucy and controversial artist who had recently brought out his own book, accurately titled *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies.* Whistler had been making appearances in other people's novels and plays since the 1870s without complaint, and he had borne du Maurier's occasional jabs in *Punch* in silence. But in caricaturing him as both a deadbeat and a fraud, Whistler

Trilby discreetly bares her foot, posing for the Laird (left), Taffy and Billee.

CAT BROOCH



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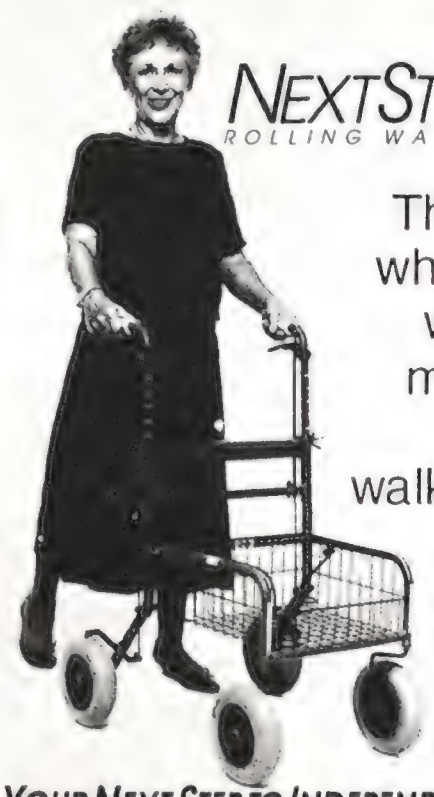

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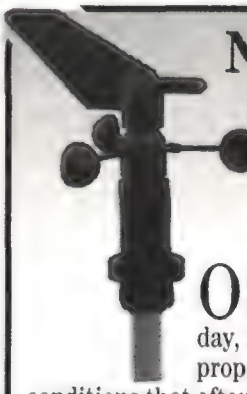

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Under Svengali's spell, Trilby sang like an angel and was soon the toast of Europe.

alleged, the author of *Trilby* had gone much too far.

Whistler charged that the unflattering resemblance between the caddish Joe Sibley and himself, which he had seen in the early serial installments, was damaging to his reputation, his financial and artistic probity. He threatened to sue. After reams of correspondence between Whistler and his solicitors and *Harper's* lawyers, and coverage in the American and British press, which ignited a furor on both sides of the Atlantic, du Maurier agreed for the book edition to soften the portrayal of the Sibley character, change his name to Antony and make him a Swiss. He promised to delete the offending passages and a likeness of Whistler, although at least one illustration with him in view did sneak into the published book. The brouhaha was a bookseller's dream–Whistler's taking offense drummed up more publicity for *Trilby* than any advertising campaign, and *Harper's* circulation continued to shoot up. The book version of *Trilby* was launched in September 1894 with all the force of an avalanche.

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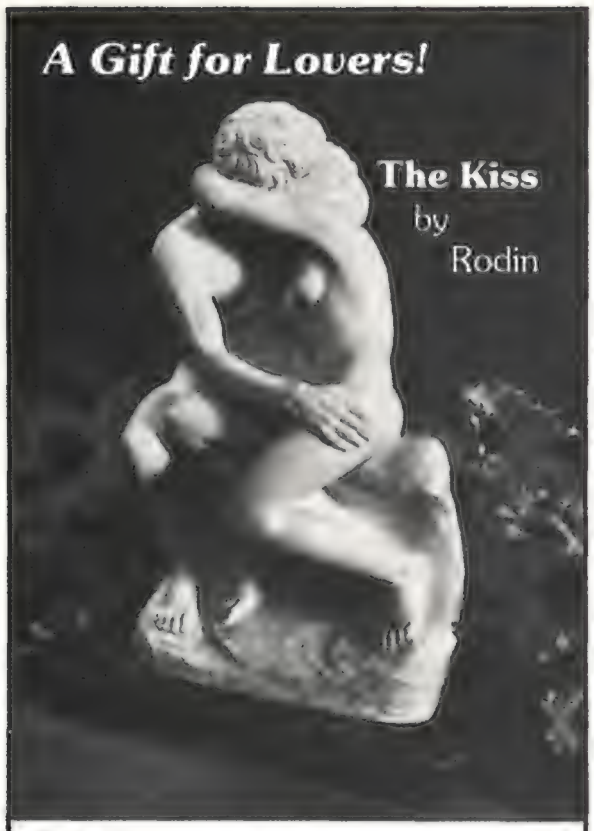
the aroused unconscious, *Trilby* offered an instant guide to finding and fitting into an idealized yet seemingly attainable bohemia. As the *Atlantic Monthly* commented in 1895, *Trilby* was a "nineteenth century fairy tale for grown men and women," and quite a few acted it out. Young men dressed up as bohemian art students (based on du Maurier's illustrations) and promenaded around town. As for women, *Trilby*'s publication coincided with their entering the workplace in larger numbers, and with their growing quest for a wider political and cultural scope. Never had belief in the possibility of liberating oneself through the arts been so popular, and *Trilby* was on the crest of it.

How many Americans were stirred by all these declarations of independence? The novel was hardly a serious vehicle of information, but the newspapers and the ministry kept asserting that homegrown Trilbys were jumping onto model stands all over the country. One Emilie Ruck de Schell, who shared a studio in New York with a female artist, made a bold foray by announcing that she was a dedicated bohemian, writing articles about her adventures as a freelance journalist struggling to survive. Tellingly, a chance to attain true Trilbydom was indignantly refused. When a male artist asked Miss de Schell to pose in the nude for him–after all, he argued, she did so for her roommate–she was enraged at the insult. As the writer Albert Parry observed, even the most advanced American women wanted to be Trilbys only if they could do so without undressing. They had no intention of becoming fallen women, with or without hearts of gold.

However, on March 19, 1895, a worried editorial in the *New York Tribune* headlined "Trilbyismus" fumed at an article in a medical journal identifying *Trilby* as the "exciting cause of a maudlin mania." Conceding that the country was already "beset by a veritable epidemic of Trilby fads," such as "Trilby accents of speech and Trilby



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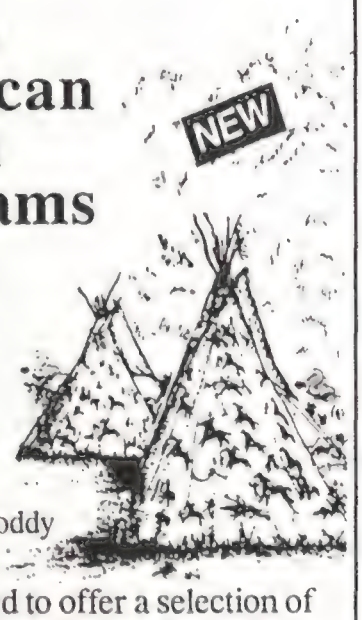

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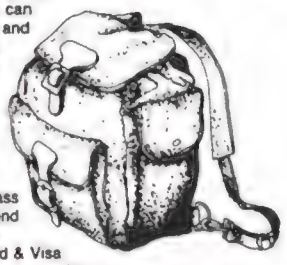

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poses of person, Trilby tableaus, teas and dances . . . Trilby clubs and reading classes and prize examinations, Trilby nomenclature for everybody and everything," the writer felt that if the Trilbyismus infection were left unchecked, young women would be gravely imperiled. Despite Trilby's charm, what was she "but a wanton? A reformed wanton, if you will, but even a reformed wanton is scarcely to be taken as an ideal for maidenhood to emulate." But it was too late to stop the *Trilby* craze. When the first American best-seller list was printed in February 1895, du Maurier's novel was on it. Priced at a hefty $1.75, it had sold more than 200,000 copies and was the number-one seller in nine cities, including New York, Boston, Chicago and Los Angeles. New York's Mercantile Library had 100 copies in circulation, and the Chicago Public Library estimated that it could have used ten times the 26 copies already on the shelves. This massive following was intent on enshrining Trilby over government portals across the land. Postal officials in Washington, D.C. received petitions from all over the country to name any new post offices after du Maurier's heroine. Those in Franklin County, Ohio, and Schuyler County, Illinois, were indeed allowed to have her name.

The clergy jumped into the debate on Trilby's morality–her good spirits versus her loose living. In Philadelphia,

Seeing Svengali's portrait, Trilby launched into one last, beautiful song, then, surrounded by her faithful artist friends and Billee's mother, died.

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several ministers condemned the story, and one in the Roxborough section wanted the book banned from the public library. A New York clergyman gave a public lecture endorsing *Trilby*, allowing that despite the descriptions of "immoral quarters," once Trilby "learns to know right and wrong, she becomes a white lily grown out of a mudbank." And as Trilby "crowns her womanhood with her sacrifice of a life," one "can't read *Trilby* without feeling better and purer."

Where readers and churchgoers went, merchandisers were quick to follow. In homage to Trilby's feet, Trilby shoes were marketed, and fashionable ladies sported a silver scarf pin of a nude foot. The Trilby motif then spread to such foot-related items as socks, shoe laces, garters and bunion chasers. New Yorkers could purchase tootsie-shaped ice creams, there was a Trilby sausage in Philadelphia, and the true worshiper could visit a town cashing in on the boom. A Florida whistle-stop in Pasco County, hoping to attract tourists, changed its name from Macon to "Trilby." A street was christened "Little Billee," and the center of town was planned as "Svengali Square."

Whistler threatened suit when he saw acid caricature of himself in *Trilby* serial.

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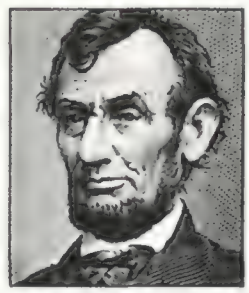

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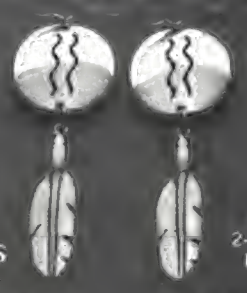

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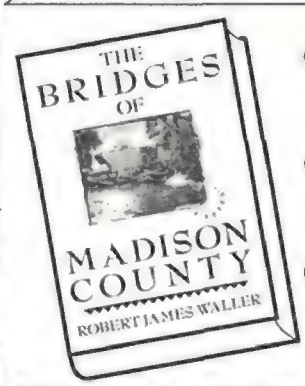

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Trilby's infiltration into the hoopla of everyday life subsided after a few years, though a 1934 survey reported that sales had surpassed a million copies. By then the book was enjoying a second life in plays and films. The honor of *Trilby*'s first dramatization belongs to a production premiering in Philadelphia on December 29, 1894. By a nice irony, the actors were artists, presumably the only interpreters of du Maurier who were bohemians in real life. The idea originated in the studio of the American painter Robert Henri. Recently back from Paris, the great grail of bohemia, Henri became the natural leader of the city's best artist-reporters.

Henri's coterie had decided to stage its own comic turn on *Trilby*. Thus was born "Twillbe," by Charles Williamson, a local mathematics professor and part-time dramatist whose farces ably mimicked Gilbert and Sullivan. The demand for tickets was so great that the

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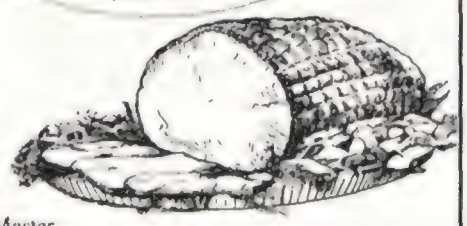

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performance packed the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Henri, as befitting his magnetic effect on his disciples, played Svengali. Everett Shinn was the expatriate painter "James McNails Whiskers," William Glackens was Svengali's henchman, and to John Sloan, who could sing falsetto, was awarded the plum role of the beleaguered "Twillbe A'Barrel." Costumed in a voluminous gown, a Burne-Jones wig and giant feet, Sloan had to jump onto a table at the sight of a mouse. "This violent action caused my busts to fall out," he reminisced many years later. "Henri . . . kicked them into the wings with a serene and magnificent gesture that I shall never forget."

Svengali met his end by being bitten to death by mosquitoes outside of Atlantic City. "Twillbe" received a splendid review in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and was then repeated by popular demand.

This glorious effort was superseded by an authorized adaptation of *Trilby*, performed in Boston, New York, Manchester and London in 1895. Eminent actor-manager Herbert Beerbohm Tree starred as Svengali in the London company. The actor playing Little Billee wore a soft felt hat

London's Svengali was Herbert Beerbohm Tree, with Dorothea Baird as his Trilby.

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with an indented crown as part of his costume. It was immediately dubbed a "trilby," a name–and a man's fashion–still current in Britain and parts of the United States. The Princess of Wales attended one performance and objected to the leading lady's bare feet. Nevertheless, the play remained on the boards throughout the 1890s and was revived in 1905, 1921 and 1938.

Hollywood inevitably latched on to such a proven box-office champion, and *Trilby* has been filmed many times. In the movie versions, the dramatic interest fixates more openly on the occult and erotic elements. Accordingly, Svengali was made into a more appealing figure. A silent film of 1922 and its 1931 remake as a talkie were both called *Svengali*. In the latter, the title role was played with hammy gusto by John Barrymore, a Svengali to sway any leading lady. His mesmerist is a dashing man whose eyes project enough power to keep Trilby in a trance at any distance, through walls

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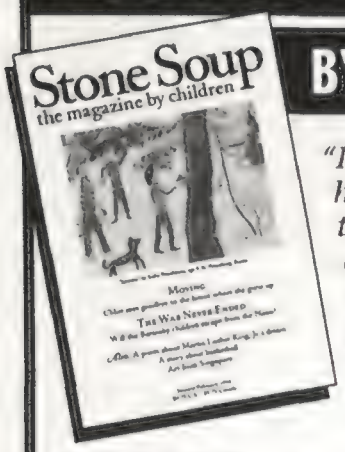

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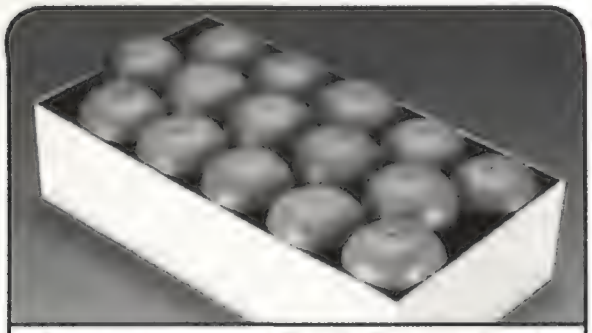
and across rooftops. In 1955 NBC broadcast "Svengali and the Blonde," a spoof with the dream cast of Basil Rathbone and Carol Channing. Who would not give all to hear the pre-Svengali Channing squawk "The Last Rose of Summer," as one reviewer wrote, "in a voice like a bullfrog impaled on a fishhook"? The last dramatization of *Trilby* was a 1983 made-for-TV movie starring Jodie Foster as a rock'n'roll singer and Peter O'Toole as her sexy, corrupting mentor.

Perhaps the ultimate psychodrama spawned by *Trilby* was its baleful effect on her creator. Gladdened at first by the financial gusher that his novel represented, du Maurier soon became embarrassed, overwhelmed and soured by his gargantuan success. Why did this torrent of publicity and acclaim rain down on him when it never came to writers he knew were his superiors? Henry James, who watched his friend weather *Trilby*, on one visit found du Maurier depressed "in spite of. . .the deafening roar. . .of sordid gold flowing in to him."

Du Maurier felt assailed by his readers; he received at least five letters a day from the United States alone.

A target of reform-minded churchwomen, he was far less equipped to deal with the idolaters. He couldn't bear their letters' fatuous salutations–"We wonder at our boldness in addressing you," from a staff of teachers–or the absurd inability to distinguish between fact and fiction, as when correspondents complained that they could not find Little Billee's pictures in the National Gallery.

Such tributes, which had nothing to do with artistic achievement, poisoned du Maurier's personality and outlook. Old friends saw the amusing fellow they knew replaced by a sad, diminished man who hated being a public figure. But strangest of all, du Maurier's decline, which began in late 1894 and continued until his death on October 8, 1896, evolved into a frightful travesty of his own best-seller. Just as Svengali secured Trilby an international following that sapped her life, *Trilby* made du Maurier into a celebrity and fatally robbed him of everything he valued. If Trilby was partly responsible for murdering her creator, his demise underscored the archetypal truth of his message. A Svengali lurks in every unconscious, and when our psyches fall prey to intolerable pressures, our lives are no longer our own.



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Actors Maria and Denis Calandra, costumed as Trilby and Svengali, with residents of tiny Trilby, Florida; they may stage the play in 1994, its 100th anniversary.

Book reviews

Breath on the Mirror: Mythic Voices & Visions of the Living Maya
Dennis Tedlock
Harper San Francisco, $21

The Temple of the Jaguar: Travels in the Yucatán
Donald G. Schueler
Sierra Club Books, $25

The fascination with the Maya began more than 150 years ago with the news that American explorer John Lloyd Stephens had discovered fabulous ruins in the jungles of Mexico and Central America. At Copán, in Honduras, Stephens wrote, "Architecture, sculpture, and painting, all the arts which embellish life, had flourished in this overgrown forest; orators, warriors, and statesmen . . . had lived and passed away." Scholars of the day held that these ancient cities had been built by wandering Egyptians or survivors of submerged Atlantis; Stephens put forth what was considered a more outlandish theory: the ruins had been built by the ancestors of the native peoples of the region.

Nobody disputes Stephens' idea today, but Mayanists still don't understand the precise relationship between the modern Maya and those of the Classic era (roughly A.D. 250 to 900), in part because the issue straddles the fields of anthropology and archaeology. Enter Dennis Tedlock, a onetime student of archaeology and a poet with a gift for teasing meaning from the myths and stories of the native peoples of the Americas.

Tedlock is best known for his translation of the *Popol Vuh*, the epic creation myth and history of the modern Quiché Maya of Guatemala, a document that many scholars consider to be the most

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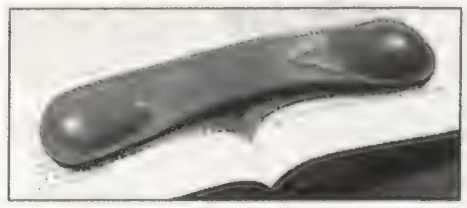

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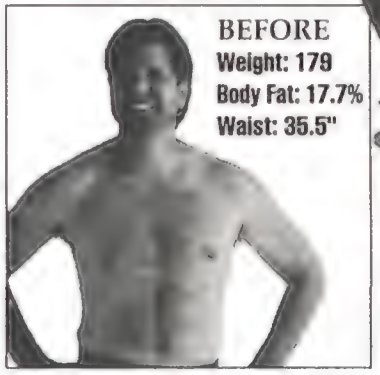

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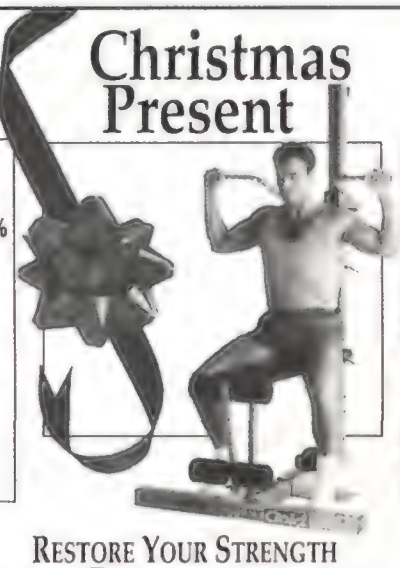

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important surviving example of Native American literature. All that remains of this ancient cycle of stories is a 17th-century transcription made by a Spanish priest. Nearly as gripping as the *Popol Vuh*'s tale of the mythic Hero Twins besting the Lords of the Underworld is the story of how Tedlock made his award-winning translation. To deepen his understanding of Maya religion and divinitory practices, he apprenticed himself to a Quiché Maya "daykeeper," or shaman, who also served as Tedlock's guide through this difficult text.

Breath on the Mirror is a detailed look at how this poet-ethnographer goes about his work. It should be read as a companion piece to the *Popol Vuh*. Here we listen as Tedlock recounts his dreams to a Maya daykeeper for interpretation. We see him searching for linguistic clues in ancient dictionaries, wandering in tunnels beneath ruins, getting stuck in a jeep on an impossibly steep mountain, while transporting an irascible daykeeper who refuses to accept the limitations of motor vehicles and remains determined to search for a sacred Maya place.

"Don Mateo seemed surprised that even a jeep might have its limits, . . . but all right, we could just leave it here, on a tilt, and continue, on foot. . . . No plan beyond that, no descriptions of the landmarks we should watch for, only this passion to go to Dawning Point, a place he hadn't seen since he was a child."

Here, too, we hear the riveting tales of Quiché storytellers, including New World versions of Old World stories: Eve helps Adam overcome his fear of women, Jesus becomes an advocate of Earth worship, Judas rejects suicide and becomes a generous businessman with a taste for cigars. "This book is a story about stories," Tedlock says, "a myth about myths." He is not content to produce the standard annotated collection; he wants to get inside these ancient stories, to puzzle over how they came to be told, and to suggest how myth can conceal itself in dreams and memories. To read this book is to enter the psychic world of the Maya–and to gain a heightened sense of the power of the spoken word.

"Myths," writes Tedlock, "live in the quiet of mountains and valleys, forests and meadows, rocks and springs, until someone . . . thinks to tell them. They have other hiding places too, inside the language we use every day. . . . Sometimes myths try to catch our eye, looking at us through the holes in a dancer's mask or

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the glass eyes in the face of a saint." Tedlock believes that the mythology of the Quiché Maya reveals deeper truths. Buried in their stories he finds a wealth of history, including vital clues to explain their relationship with those who built the magnificent Maya civilization that collapsed more than a thousand years ago. (A startling indication of this cultural continuity: the central story of the *Popol Vuh* is found illustrated on eighth-century Maya vases.)

Of course, "excavating" myths is a dicey business, one sure to raise hackles among dirt archaeologists. Stories are not potsherds, after all. They can't be dated, statistically analyzed or reassembled into their original forms. Moreover, the tale-tellers are people with a fine sense of irony and a penchant for blurring the line between myth and history.

"We tend to think of myth and history as being in conflict with one another," Tedlock has noted. Not so with the Maya, past or present. "The authors of the inscriptions at Palenque and the alphabetical text of the *Popol Vuh* treated the mythic and historical parts of their narrative as . . . a single balanced whole. . . . If we had an English word that fully expressed the Mayan sense of narrative time, it would embrace the duality of the divine and the human in the same way the Quiché term *cahuleu* or 'sky earth,' preserves the duality of what we call the 'world.'"

So how closely related are the Quiché Maya and the ancients? Archaeologists believe that the Quiché people have lived in the Guatemala highlands for many centuries; linguists note that the Quiché language is distantly related to the language of the people who built the fabulous Classic-era cities in the Maya lowlands. But were they just next-door neighbors?

The *Popol Vuh* states that the earliest Quiché nobles traveled to a place called "Tulan" or "Tolan" to receive their gods. A number of scholars believe this ancient city corresponds to Tula, a Toltec site in southern Mexico. Tedlock observes that at least a dozen ancient sites in Mesoamerica are called Tulan, but he places the Quiché Tulan closer to home. The clues he has uncovered point to the nearby ruined Maya city of Copán. He notes that in highland Maya languages the word *tolan* means "abandoned place" or "place with only the sounds of insects." The *Popol Vuh* locates Abandoned Place in the east; another ethnohistorical source, the *Annals of the Cakchiquel*, asserts that the insignia of its dynastic rulers was a bat: Copán

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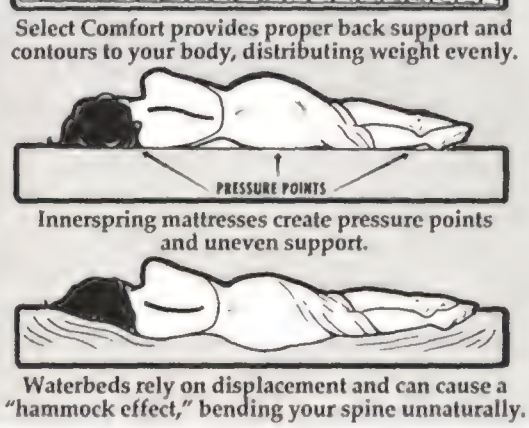
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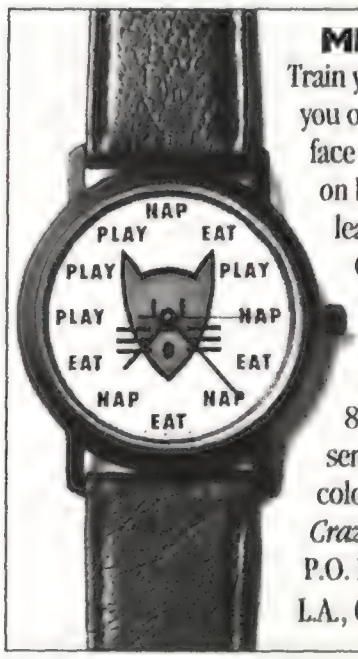

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lies due east of the Quiché highlands and its "emblem glyph" features the profile of a leaf-nosed bat.

"The mythic city becomes real," asserts Tedlock. Now this is not rock-solid proof by any stretch, but the link is intriguing. Given that scholars know that modern Maya traditions, mythology and worldview closely match those of the ancient Maya, it makes sense that the Quiché would trace their gods to one of the most important Classic Maya cities.

Donald Schueler represents another sort of Maya traveler, one drawn to the region by what Stephens called the "deep solemnity" of the ruins. (Schueler has written for SMITHSONIAN on matters as varied as backpacking and the art of genealogy.) In *The Temple of the Jaguar*, he is grieving the death of a loved one, and his grief takes the form of a quest: to glimpse the creature he had come to think of as his *nagual*, or "animal spirit." He wants to see a jaguar in the wild.

Thus we travel highways and gravel roads of Mexico alongside Schueler, from the Maya ruins of Palenque north to Campeche. Here he considers giving in to the grief and heading home to New Orleans, but fate intervenes. A rear-end collision puts him in the hands of the brassy proprietress of a trailer park, and while the van is repaired this relentless inquisitor drags Schueler back to the world of the living and sends him on his way. We head north toward Mérida, before turning west and circling south around the Yucatán peninsula. It is a wholly agreeable ride.

Schueler's tone is subdued, alert, curious, occasionally touching the soaring notes reminiscent of Stephens. Underground, he gazes at the light coming through two large openings in the roof of a cave: "The effects created by this trespassing light from the outside world were absolutely magical. The light itself was that. Golden bright high up at the gaping openings, it became milky in its descent as sunlight filtering through water, finally falling on the cavern's floor like a luteous snow."

The journey continues, the van bounces along, and we keep an eye on the birds, noting motmots at the ruins of Sayil and the pink blanket of flamingos at Celestún. The inevitable missteps include a terrifying encounter with a squad of armed soldiers on a desolate Mexican beach, but Schueler, the author of another book of travels in Mexico, is an old hand in this part of the

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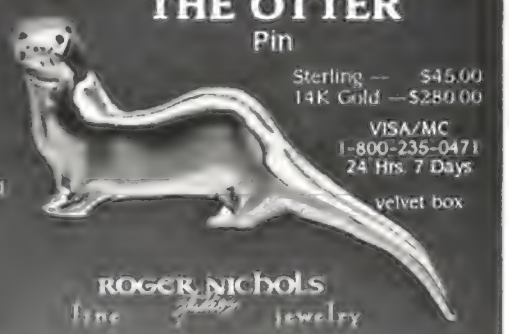

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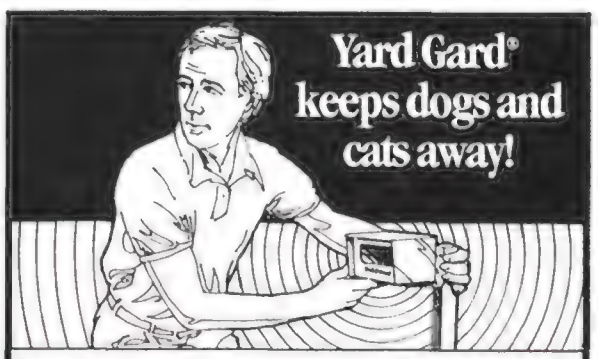

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world. Soon he touches the right chord. "We parted on the best of terms," he reports, "enriched by the advice and cigarettes that they and I had respectively handed out."

Schueler describes himself as an environmental activist, so it's no surprise that the primary focus here is on wildlife. The news of the existence of an old road that leads into the Mexican wildlife reserve of Sian Ka'an sets Schueler's compass, and he finds the road, only to discover that it leads into a mangrove swamp. No matter. He follows the old tire tracks into dense hammocks, gets stuck in a mudhole, digs the van out, then decides to spend the night there. With an hour of daylight left, the first order of business is to scout the area. "I was hardly out of sight of the van," he reports, "when the forest erupted in a pandemonium of noise and fluttering movement. Booming hoots and frantic whistles showered down on me. Branches and vines stretching midway between the canopy and the forest floor sagged under the weight of large dark shapes. Curassows!" And there were crocodiles, coatimundi and tapir, too. But, alas, no jaguar.

So we head to Belize, to the 102,000-acre Cockscomb Jaguar Preserve. Another bad road filled with rocks and mud and small streams, but also parrots and toucans. And then–bounding suddenly into the roadway not 12 feet ahead–the dappled back, white muzzle and golden eyes of a magnificent jaguar. It was a sign–Schueler's moment of personal recovery–and it left this reader wishing he had been there, too.

Karl Ackerman has edited a new edition of John Lloyd Stephens' *Incidents of Travel.*

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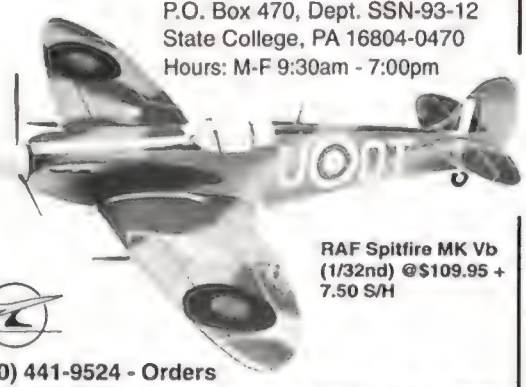

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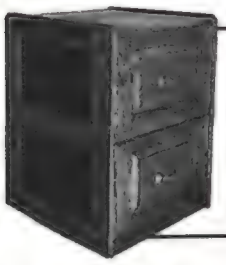

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Statement of ownership, management and circulation (required by 39 U.S.C. 3685) of *Smithsonian* published monthly at the Smithsonian Institution, 900 Jefferson Drive, Washington, D.C. 20560 for October 1, 1993. General business offices of the publisher are located at 900 Jefferson Drive, Washington, D.C. 20560. Name and address of publisher is Ronald C. Walker, 900 Jefferson Drive, Washington, D.C. 20560. Owner is Smithsonian Institution, 900 Jefferson Drive, Washington, D.C. 20560. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: None. The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal income tax purposes have not changed during preceding 12 months (Section 411.3, DMM). The average number of copies of each issue during the preceding 12 months are: (A) Total number of copies printed: 2,349,341; (B) Paid circulation: (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 10,404; (2) Mail subscriptions: 2,289,705; (C) Total paid circulation: 2,300,109; (D) Free distribution by mail, carrier, or other means: 14,977; (E) Total distribution: 2,315,086; (F) Copies not distributed: (1) Office use, left-over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 14,024; (2) Return from news agents: 20,231; (G) Total: 2,349,341. The actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date are: (A) Total number of copies printed: 2,409,629; (B) Paid circulation: (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 9,448; (2) Mail subscriptions: 2,358,038; (C) Total paid circulation: 2,367,486; (D) Free distribution by mail, carrier, or other means: 15,472; (E) Total distribution: 2,382,958; (F) Copies not distributed: (1) Office use, left-over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 6,732; (2) Return from news agents: 19,939; (G) Total: 2,409,629. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

(signed) Carey O. Randall
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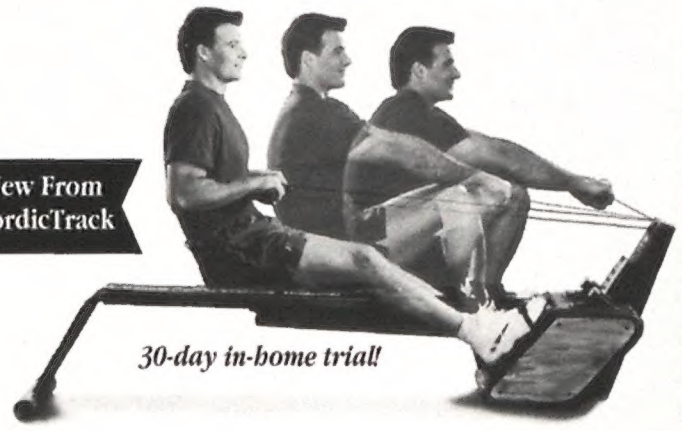

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By Bruce Watson

If you want to talk to Bruce, please hang up and write a letter

Once the ring of the phone was a peal of promise. *Riiiiiinnnngg!* Hark! There I'd be, just picking lint from the carpet and suddenly–*Riiiiiinnnngg!* Wow! Someone out there wanted to get in touch with me! Was it a good friend calling to suggest lunch? An ex-boss calling to apologize? Maybe a seductive stranger who admired my casual air in traffic. Yes, that's it. She got my license plate number, which led to my phone number and this call inviting me to Paris. "Bonjour, hello? Yes, this is he. Oh. No, I already gave. Right. Thanks anyway."

I don't answer phones anymore. Too many calls from salesmen, too many wrong numbers and almost no actual live people. Like the corporate world, I have moved into the Information Age.

When I bought my system, I made the salesman at Dave's Phone Depot a happy guy. He figured me for a basic "answering machine" type, but I wanted the cutting edge. My interactive phone system tangles every caller in a labyrinth of options so thick they need a thread, a map and a Boy Scout compass to find their way to me. And with its Phone Phriend Phinder, an alarm sounds when an actual live person who knows me is on the other end. My new number is *beep-beep-blip–dit-dot-dit-dib.* Give me a call.

"Hello, you have reached my personal touch-tone answering service. All of my operators are busy now, but your call is important to me. How else will I know whether I threw five grand down a rathole when I became the first guy on my block to reach the cutting edge? If you are calling from a touch-tone phone, press 1 now. If you are calling from a rotary phone, how does it feel to be a dinosaur? It's 1993, pal! Anybody ever tell you this is the Information Age? Get a life, hippie! Do your bell-bottoms still . . . *BEEEEP. . .*

"Hello, you have reached the Menu Section of my answering service. All of our operators are busy working overtime to afford this expensive new option in impersonal home phones. To order a croissant and a café latte, press 1. If you are a telephone solicitor offering me something I don't want at a price equal to the GDP of a small Asian country, press 2. For further options, press 3. *If,* by some miracle, you are an actual live person who knows me, press the pound key. The Phone Phriend Phinder will call me to the receiver. Thanks for calling, and now here's a dentist's office version of the Beatles' classic 'Yesterday'. . . *BEEEEP. . .*

"Hello, you have chosen further options. All of our operators are busy trying to figure out which one is the pound key. To complain about this system, press 1. To check my credit rating without my consent, press 2. If you're tired of 'Yesterday' and would rather hear Barry Manilow's 'Copacabana,' press 3. For more options than you can possibly cope with, press the eject button on your VCR . . . *BEEEEP. . .*"

My system worked, all right. Thanks to the built-in aloofness of today's interactive technologies, I never had to answer the phone again. All I did was listen in as phone salesmen, lost in my labyrinth, swore and punched the wrong keys. No more heartbreak and disappointment; I had beaten the phones at last. Then one Saturday night the Phone Phriend Phinder rang.

BRIIIIIIINNNNNGGGG!!!!

A call from an actual live person! Someone who knew me! I raced to the phone and picked it up for the first time in weeks. "Hello! You know me! You're a live person! Who is it?"

"Hello," I heard my own voice say, "you have reached my personal touch-tone answering service. All of my operators are busy now, but your call is important to me. How else will . . ."

"Don't hang up!. . .*BLIP. .* .How do I shut this. . .*BEEEEP. .* .thing off?"

From the icy depths beneath my own recorded monotone I heard a shout: "Hello! I pressed some. . .*BLEEEEP . .* .key that looked like a ticktacktoe board. Where am I? Hello?"

". . .whether I threw five grand down a rathole when I became the first guy on my block. . ."

"Don't hang up!" I shouted. "I'm ready to talk. . .*DIT. .* .this is the. . . *BEEEEP. .* .ing Information Age!"

". . .feel to be a dinosaur? It's 1993, pal. . .Get a life. . . ."

The voice came from deep within the maze. "Hey, how do I get out of here?"

"Press the pound key!" I shouted.

"The pound key?" The voice was slipping away. "Like British pound? Don't see. . .*BLIP. .* .one of those."

"Try the star key!" I shouted.

A thousand violins chimed in with strains of "Yesterday."

BEEEEP. . . A human voice came through the line, full volume. An actual person talking to me. On my phone. "That's not a pound key. That's a ticktacktoe board. Hey, anybody there?"

I was desperate to know who was calling. But here in the Information Age, you have to play hard to get. "Yeah, I'm here," I said. "Whaddaya want?"

"Is Biff home?"

"Biff ?"

"Yeah. Isn't this *beep-beep-blip–dit-dot-dib-dit*?"

". . .*dit-dib,*" I said. ". . .*dit-DIB!*"

"Sorry. Hey, I *said* I'm sorry. Any chance I can get my quarter back?"

"Try the star key," I said.

I just don't answer the phone anymore, not even when the Phone Phriend Phinder rings. I let my phone system talk to other phone systems. *DIT-DOT-BLEEEEP-BLIP* systems understand the Information Age better than I ever will.

"The first time I gave her a diamond ring her hug took my breath away."

I'll always remember that face. The smile bordering on a tear. Silence as powerful as music. Eyes as lively as the diamond I nervously slipped on her finger. And now that we have come so far together, perhaps now is the moment to celebrate that love, once again, with a diamond as exceptional as our love.

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